

# Prime Effect

Von Leonis-Prime

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# Kapitel 1:

## PRIME EFFECT

### CHAPTER 1

Jack Darby stood at the window and looked out at the Earth before him, the Homeworld of Humanity. As he marveled at the beauty of the blue planet, the young Man could not help but reflect on the events that had brought him this far in his life, since before he turned Sixteen, Jack's life was not what you would have called eventful. Probably in no small part to the fact that he lived in a small dusty Town in the North American State of Nevada, and that Town was called Jasper.

He lived there with his Mother, June Darby. And he had a lot of responsibilities thrust upon him after his Father left early on in his childhood, something that she would not have wanted for her Son. But Jack never complained, completing any task given by her or dropped on his shoulders by their situation as a Mother and Son team. He even got a after-school job at the local Diner, so that he could help with the rent for their home.

Jack never thought that this job would do anything more for him than help put food on the table and keep a roof over their heads. But after the events that happened next, the young Man would wonder if this was all really in Fate's control. Since one day he came across a beautiful blue Motorcycle in the Diner's Car-park, and it was this moment that would change his life forever.

Because this Motorcycle turned out to be an alien robot or autonomous Robotic Organisms from the Planet Cybetron, as he would later be told. And this one in particular was Femme called Arcee who then took Jack and two other Humans called Raf and Miko to meet the rest of her team, which she referred to as 'Autobots'.

There was Ratchet, the team's grouchy medic and Bumblebee, the team's scout. The team's heavy hitter and former 'Wrecker' was Bulkhead, while Arcee herself was the team's second in Command. The one in charge of the group was Optimus Prime, who was noble and compassionate leader.

Jack and his new friends soon became part of the Autobots conflict against another group of Cybertronians called 'Decepticons', who were led by the tyrannical 'Megatron'. It was a war that had started on and consumed their Homeworld Cybertron before spreading out amongst the Galaxy and finding its way to Earth.

But the Teenagers new Alien 'friends' were not fighting alone as they had secret backing from the US Government, who's contact went by the name of Agent William Fowler. It was not always the strongest of alliances, but it held on and grew during the ongoing conflict between these two powerful groups of 'Transformers' even when

faced with more threats like the treacherous Human group called 'MECH'.

Over the years that the War raged on Earth, in secret of course. The Bots and Humans friendships blossomed, while also being tested at times. And the Autobots gained new soldiers to their cause...like Smokescreen, while also losing some too....like Bulkhead and earlier before that, Tailgate and Cliffjumper, both had been close friends with Arcee. Every member of 'Team Prime' had a part to play, including it's Human members.

Jack himself became a temporary bearer of Optimus's 'Matrix of Leadership', after the Autobot Leader was missing in action after the defeat a god-like being called 'Unicron' who inhabited Earth's very core. The Prime had chosen Jack for this purpose after witnessing how mature and responsible the Teenager was, seeing something in Jack that was more than meets the eye.

After Optimus retrieved a powerful relic called the 'Star-Saber, the war entered an almost stalemate-like state for a few years as the Decepticons held themselves back in fear of the power the Autobots now possessed. But there were still skirmishes between the two sides, and Jack and Miko found themselves working alongside their friends in the field and gaining the kind of experience that others of their age would not even dream of.

By the time that Jack had turned twenty one years old, he was already experienced in the ways of war thanks to his part in the Cybertronian Civil War. But it was at this point that the Decepticons made their presence known to the rest of the world for Megatron was furious with his failure to destroy the Autobots, after discovering the location of their Base near Jasper. So he unleashed the entirety of his Decepticons on Humanity, sending groups to attack major Cities around the Planet while the Con Leader himself attacked Washington DC.

And while Jack stood at the window and looked down at the planet as he thought about all of this, he found himself recalling the events of that battle.

*'As Arcee sped down the road in her Motorcycle mode with Jack on her back, they both could not help but wonder how the battle was going for everyone else.*

*"I hope everyone else is doing alright Arcee?" the twenty one year old said with a worried tone while looking down at her futuristic dashboard.*

*"I'm sure the others are alright Jack, I am more worried about what you had just been through with Starscream." the Femme replied with a supportive tone to her voice, earning a lopsided grin from Jack in return.*

*"I have been through worse than that Arcee, we both have. And besides, you scrapped that stiletto-heeled true and proper." he said back with a tinge of pride to his voice, which if she was Human would have made the Femme blush.*

*"Thanks Partner, but he had it coming.... that and more."*

*"I know, but still...." Jack started to say before both his and her Com-links activated.*

*"This is Ratchet, is there anyone in Washington who can respond?" the voice of the Medic said in a heightened and yet still grouchy voice.*

*"We read you Ratchet, what's going on?" Arcee replied as the pair sped through the devastated streets of the US Capital, heading toward the sounds of explosions and further fighting nearer it's center.*

*"I believe Optimus is in trouble..." the Bot said back, making Jack's eyes widen in response.*

*"What do you mean Ratchet?" the Human asked, getting his words in before the Femme who instead kept her focus on the road as she let her Partner do the talking.*

*"Jack, Optimus told me to ground-bridge Bumblebee and Smokescreen to assist Wheeljack and Miko at the Trinidad sector of the City, after the pair reported more Vehicon reinforcements overwhelming the Military there. But soon after I lost contact with him and have been unable to regain contact with anyone else before you." the Medic said back with a worried tone.*

*"Well we are heading North West up Pennsylvania Avenue right now Ratchet, so can be at the White House in a few minutes." Arcee spoke up as they turned onto the stretch of road.*

*"Alright Arcee, I will try to regain communications with the others in the meantime. Be careful." Ratchet said back.*

*"Will do, Arcee out." the Femme replied before accelerating to full speed, making Jack tighten his grip on her as they sped onwards.*

*Just a few minutes later and the pair entered the President's Park, immediately spotting their Leader as he was fighting a group of Vehicons and Megatron at the same time.*

*"Optimus needs our help Arcee." Jack said as he saw the Decepticon Leader knock his Adversary to the ground, destroying more of the South Lawn.*

*"First things first Jack." the Femme replied in an urgent tone as two Vehicons spotted them and opened fire, hitting the ground next to the pair. The force of the nearby explosion sent both of them into the air, with Jack flung off the Motorcycle in response.*

*"Shit!" he shouted in return. but Arcee quickly transformed back into her bipedal form and caught her Partner with one hand, while changing her other into a cannon and firing back at their attackers. With one blast hitting an enemy Con directly in the spark chamber, while the other rolled out of the way as the Femme landed back on her feet.*

*"I've got you Partner." she replied, earning an affectionate smile from the Human as she put him back on the ground.*

*"Never doubted you Arcee..." Jack replied, gaining a quick smile from her in return as he equipped his rifle.*

*"...now lets even this out and help Optimus." he added, earning a nod from the Femme as she activated an arm-blade with her free arm.*

*"Let' do this." she said as the pair ran towards the battle unfolding before them, shooting at the other Vehicon as it took cover behind one of the trees.*

*But they were now close enough to hear what was being said between the two leaders as they fought, gaining the attention of Megatron as he glanced in their direction while pinning Optimus to the floor.*

*"Take care of that wretched Autobot and her Human Pet, Prime is mine to finish." he spat at the remaining Vehicons, who all turned their attention to the new arrivals and opened fire.*

*Optimus though took this as his chance and punched the Decepticon Lord in the face, knocking him away and allowing the Prime to get back to his feet.*

*"This will not be your day, Megatron." he said in a stoic tone, while his rival smirked back at him as he wiped some leaking energon from his mouth.*

*"I have already won Optimus, you just don't see it." he spat back before the pair charged at each other once again, trading blows as each hit they took erupted with sparks and squirts of energon.*

*"I have put up with you and your wretched Autobots for long enough, Prime. And because of that, this world that you care about will now suffer the consequences....and burn." the Decepticon Leader added as he elbowed the Prime in the face, making him stumble backwards.*

*"I pity you Megatron..." Optimus began to reply as he recovered from that hit, while Megatron followed through with a punch to the Autobot's chest. But the Prime saw it coming and blocked the attack, countering with an uppercut as he continued.*

*"...For we were once friends..." he added as he then grabbed Megatron and lifted him into the air.*

*"...but there is no redemption for what you have done now." the Prime continued to say as he through the Decepticon to the floor, making him grimace as he rolled onto his front.*

*"And who says that I want redemption Optimus?" Megatron said in return as he got onto his knees, while the Autobot Leader stared back.*

*"Because our species now stands on the edge of extinction and rather than watch us die slowly, like this war has made us do. So I would rather burn everything around me..." he added as he activated his blade, which slid out from beneath his arm-cannon.*

*"...and feel your spark crush in my hands!" he spat before launching himself at the Prime, who activated his own blades and brought them up to deflect the Enemy's attack.*

*"We might have used up our life energy in this pointless war, Megatron." Optimus replied as he continued to defend against the Decepticon Lord's continuous attacks.*

*"But there is always hope..." he started to say, before Megatron suddenly sliced the Prime's right arm off and followed through with a stab to his lower torso.*

*"Optimus!" Arcee shouted after killing another Vehicon with her arm-blade, gaining Jack's attention as he felled another with his rifle.*

*'Oh no!' he thought as he saw the Decepticon Leader stand over their friend and Mentor.*

*"I really have had enough of your sanctimonious drivel, and cannot for the life of me understand how we were ever friends." he said as Optimus bled out energon from his wounds and fell to one knee, with Megatron lifting his blade up for a killing stroke.*

*"Time to meet the Allspark....Optimus Prime."*

*But just as he was about to kill the Prime, Arcee suddenly jumped in and slashed Megatron across the face with her arm-blade, gaining a grimace from him as Jack shot dead the last Vehicon.*

*"I will kill you Megatron!" the Femme spat while quickly following through by firing her weapon at the Decepticon Leader, but he simply shrugged the blasts off and knocked her to the ground with one punch which cracked her chest-plate armour, winding the Femme in the process.*

*"You really wish to die before your Leader, very well!" Megatron spat as he swung his blade down at Arcee, but was suddenly stopped in mid-attack as the armour on his attacking arm exploded, earning a cry of pain from him.*

*"What?" the Femme said before seeing Jack stand there with his rifle smoking from its grenade launcher.*

*"No one hurts my family." he said with a defiant tone, earning a smile from her and a look of shock from the Decepticon Lord.*

*"You?" he spat as he left Arcee on the floor and turned to face the Human, a look of pure hate on his face as he narrowed his red optics.*

*"You have been a thorn in the Decepticon cause for far too long, boy! I will enjoy ripping you limb from limb!" he said before lunging with a fist at Jack, who dived out of the way just in time as Megatron's fist hit the ground next to him.*

*'Got to make this count!' he thought as he landed on his front, before rolling onto his back and firing another sabre round which hit the Con Leader directly in his chest-plate.*

*"Arrrggh!" he cried out as he reached to his damaged section, which had left his Decepticon insignia charred. Jack then used this distraction to get back to his feet and get some distance from the Enemy as Arcee watched with widened optics.*

*'Jack!' she thought as she tried to move, but gasped in pain as the wound Megatron had given her was still causing her trouble. So all she could do was watch as the Decepticon Lord returned his attention to her partner.*

*"You will pay for that!" he spat as he then fired his Cannon at Jack, only for it to hit the ground near him. But the blast was enough to knock the young Man to the ground and wind him, while Megatron walked over and smiled as he saw his Enemy lying there in pain.*

*"Jack!" Arcee screamed as she fought through the pain, trying to lift her cannon-arm up to help as the Decepticon aimed his weapon down at her best friend. But Megatron had heard the Femme and took pleasure in knowing his about to end the life of yet another friend of hers as inside of his Cannon's barrel began to glow with purple energy.*

*"You die now!" he said as he prepared to fire but then suddenly Optimus came out of nowhere and barged into the Con leader, knocking the weapon away from his friend.*

*"No, no more!" he shouted while pushing the Decepticon Lord away from Jack, who rolled out of harm's way before getting back to his feet and watched as the two Leaders clashed again.*

*"You don't have what it takes to end this Prime, but I do." Megatron spat as he blocked a punch from Optimus's remaining arm, while also reactivating his blade which slid out from under his cannon. But just as he was about to swing it towards his one time friend, Jack fired his last remaining sabre round which hit his left knee and shattered it in an explosion that made the Con Lord cry out in pain.*

*"Arrrragh!" he spat as he began to fall forward, but Optimus instead punched him back in the face. The force of the hit made Megatron lean back while the Autobot Leader readied another attack.*

*"Megatron, be gone...for good!" he spat before punching his former Friend in the chest and crushing his spark chamber inside, which made the Decepticon Leader's optics fade to black as his body went limp and fell onto it's back.'*

The shock of Megatron's death demoralized the Decepticons and they surrendered to the Alliance of Autobot and human forces who had fought side by side in the battle.

Ever since that day, nothing was ever the same. As Megatron and Optimus realised in the last days of the war, both sides had used up all of their remaining energon reserves and so were no longer able to maintain their bodies, which meant certain extinction for the Cybertronian species. But instead of succumbing to what Megatron had seen as the inevitable, the remaining Cybertronians under Optimus's leadership decided to transfer their sparks into the human like pretender bodies that the cons

had been building, which originally was so that they could infiltrate Human society . As a way to show appreciation for their efforts to save Earth, the leaders of the planet allowed the transformers to build a city for both species to live and work together in peace and they named the city New Iacon.

But after a few years Jack felt that he was no longer needed in the new Utopia that was being built and with Optimus's blessing joined the newly formed joint defence program. Arcee didn't take the news well but wished her close friend the best and told him she would wait for him to return. Miko joined the force too, but only so she could then work with Wheeljack, who had promised her a place among the Wreckers. Bulkhead had died during the war and Miko saw this as the best way to honour his memory.

Raf had decided to join the Autobot Science Foundation and Bumblebee stayed with him, loyal friend to the end.

Jack made few friends during his training, one in particular named Kaidan Alenko. And he was part of the reason why Jack was where he was now. He was aboard the Alliance's newest starship, The Normandy.

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Jack looked away from the window when he heard voices approaching him from behind.

He turned around to see two men walking up to him, still talking to each other. One was an African-British man in his mid-forties. The other was a Caucasian man, who was in his early fifties but still in good shape considering his age. Jack recognized both of them. The former was Captain Anderson, the Normandy's commanding officer. The latter was Optimus Prime in his pretender body. Even after all these years Jack was still surprised whenever he saw the Prime.

"So this is the young officer that you wanted to have on my crew." said Anderson as he reached out and shook the young man's hand.

"Its nice to meet you again Darby."

"Same here Captain." responded Jack. Optimus looked at both of them before speaking.

"Yes, Jack has been a tremendous asset to my team during and after the war. And now that he is a officer in the Alliance, I believe that he could be of greater help to your ship and crew as it explores the uncharted areas of our galaxy."

Anderson took a moment and pondered on the Primes words.

"Well with your rank Darby, you would become my XO. I hope you will be up to the



challenge that goes with such a position."

A slight smirk appeared on Jack's face.

"Yes sir, you can count on me."

"Good, well I am needed in the CIC, please join me there after you are finished with Optimus." replied Anderson as he headed to the elevator.

"farewell Captain." Optimus said.

"Prime." Anderson acknowledged and as soon as the Captain was out of earshot, Optimus turned back to Jack.

"So how have you been Jackson, it has been a while since we last spoke." Jack looked back out the window.

"Well I suppose you heard about the incident on New Terra."

"Yes, the colony came under attack from a large force of slavers looking to abduct the colonists and killed the majority of the security personnel. It looked perilous for the families there. But you took command of the remaining soldiers and even though they were still inexperienced, you helped them keep their cool and successfully drove out the slavers with hardly any casualties to your group." Optimus recalled with pride in his voice. Jack didn't know where to look, suddenly feeling very embarrassed by the Prime's words.

"Yeah those kids did well despite the desperate situation we were in. But they really deserve the credit, all I did was not abandon them." Jack sheepishly replied. Optimus looked at him.

"You shouldn't be embarrassed by it Jackson, you showed them that they weren't alone and inspired them with the belief that they could overcome any threat or obstacle. That is one of the virtues of being a Leader, which again proves your potential to becoming a Prime one day. That was why I gave you the key to Vector Sigma all those years ago. I take it you still have the key on your person?"

Jack nodded and undid his uniform's collar button and pulled out a chain that he wore around his neck. On the chain and glowing ever so slightly was the key. It had shifted to the size of a pendant (like most Cybertronian artifacts, it had mass shifting ability)

Optimus smiled at Jack.

"I see that the key still resonates with you Jack. It takes a very strong spark or soul as your people call it to make the key glow like that." Jack put the key back under his uniform and buttoned his collar. He looked up and suddenly saw regret in the Prime's eyes.

"Optimus, what's wrong."

"Jack I am sorry I was not there for your promotion ceremony, I was forced to back out do to an incident between an Autobot transport and the Quarian Flotilla." Jack smiled and patted Optimus on the shoulder.

"You shouldn't blame yourself Optimus, I know you would have been there if you could. Mom was there and recorded the whole thing. When next you see her, I'm sure she show you the video. She shows it to everyone."

Optimus's face brightened up and he took a breath before replying.

"I did hear about that and I will ask her the next time we meet."

Jack raised an eyebrow at that comment.

"How did you hear about it?"

"From Arcee of course, she attended the ceremony. You didn't see her there?" Optimus asked curiously.

"No." Jack replied sadly as he looked away from Optimus for a moment, his memories of Arcee quickly overtaking his own thoughts. He had missed her as much as she was obviously missing him. But if that which had happened on the last night they were together had not occurred, then he might not have so readily accepted Optimus's suggestion to join the defense force. He faced Optimus, a little guilt showing on his face.

"I didn't know she was there. I mean we have messaged each other while I was training, but I haven't seen her since I left for basic training."

Optimus looked at Jack not quite sure as what to say.

"Well I am not sure what had transpired between you two which has caused this predicament. But I think that whatever it is, you shouldn't let it get in the way of your friendship....."

Optimus was about to say more when his com-link activated.

"Optimus, its Ratchet. The world leaders have asked to meet you in New Iacon at the Decagon, it's about the new transit system we will be making available to them."

The Prime put his hand to his audio receiver.

"Acknowledged Ratchet, I will be there momentarily." He then deactivated his com link and turned back to Jack.

"It looks like I have to be on my way Jackson. If you ever wish to talk about anything that's on your mind, just give me a call..." He said as he placed his hand on Jack's shoulder and smiled at the young man.

"..And I also want you to know that I am very proud of you."

"Thanks Optimus." Jack replied as Optimus smiled at him before turning away and entering the elevator, its doors closing behind him.

Once he was at the CIC Jack walked straight up to the cockpit and saw Anderson standing there talking to the pilot. Anderson noticed Jack and beckoned him over.

"Commander this is our pilot, Hotrod."

The pilot stood up and looked at Jack. He was a Caucasian male who looked to be in his mid twenties. He had orange hair with yellow highlights. He smiled and offered Jack his hand.

"Hi you must be Commander Jack Darby, it's a real honor to meet the human who helped put down Megatron."

"Thanks, so you are from New Iacon." Jack replied as he shook Hotrod's hand.

"Yeah..though not originally, I was the one piloting the Ark when it landed on Earth years back. Elita One said I was one of the best pilots around so put my name down for this gig." Hotrod exclaimed proudly.

"Well its good to know that our ships is in safe hands Hotrod. Now if you will take us out of Earth's orbit, I want to see what the Normandy is capable of before we leave the Sol system. So we will be taking the ship on a shakedown cruise around the system." Anderson ordered as he beckoned Jack to follow him back into the CIC.

"Aye, Aye Captain." Hotrod replied as he took his seat and started working the controls, taking the Normandy out of Earth's orbit and into outer space. Jack and Anderson stopped at the Captain's terminal next the galaxy map.

"So have you had a good look at the ship yet since you have been on board Commander? Anderson asked while looking over reports at his station.

"Not really Captain, I came straight up here as soon as I boarded back at Earth." Jack replied, earning a look from Anderson.

"Well then, since we are not leaving the system yet, i see no reason for you to be up here right now. Take a few hours off and take a look around. I'll call you if I need you up here."

Jack saluted the captain and turned to leave.

"Commander, also your quarters are on deck 3 and your belongings are already there." Anderson added as he looked back at his XO.

"Yes sir, thank you Sir." Jack replied, earning and annoyed expression from the

Captain. This made Jack swallow hard in return.

*'Great, only been here five minutes and already irritated the Captain.'* he thought to himself.

"Enough with the sirs, I like to keep things informal with my XO's, okay?" he asked, making Jack smile and nod back.

"Okay...Anderson."

The captain returned the smile and returned to his station, leaving Jack to his thoughts as he left the CIC.

## PRIME EFFECT

In the hour or so after leaving the CIC, Jack had visited the engineering deck and Shuttle bay. He had met with the crewmen there. They all seemed like good, honest people who loved the job they each did. And he was pleased to meet each of them. But as of right now he just wanted to go to his quarters and relax until Anderson called for him. So Jack exited the elevator on deck three (crew deck) and made his way to the door to his quarters.

He opened the door and walked in. He was stunned by how large it was. It had a full sized bed, office desk and standard furniture. No bathroom, guess that meant he still had to share with the rest of the crew. But he was very impressed with it. The last digs he had was the top bunk in the crew quarters. He walked over and sat down on the chair and rested his arms on the desk. He then looked over to the personal terminal to his right and activated it. The blue screen lit up and displayed three options, messages, Journal and ship database. He noticed that he had one new message and selected it. His eyes widened at the name of the sender. 'Arcee' he thought to himself. He felt his heart skip a beat as he opened the message and began reading it.

*'Hi Jack, I know we haven't spoken for a long time but I hope that in sending this message to you that we can change that. I don't know how else to say this so I will just go ahead and say it, I miss you. Ever since you left it has not been the same without you partner. In the time after you gone Miko left to join up and Raf and Bumblebee soon after and it seemed that the Silo was more like a tomb than the happy home that it had been for the number of years since the three of you had come into our lives. Ratchet at first looked like he appreciated the quiet especially since it was usually Miko and her electric guitar giving him a headache as he tried to work on his experiments but now it looks like he misses the company too. As for Optimus' he just focuses on his work which as gone up a lot since the war ended. Funny, you would think that it would be the other way round. But I can see it is just his way of getting by. But myself, I have found it really hard to go on each day and not see your face smiling back at me when ever I go out for a ride on your motorcycle (which I have kept in perfect condition) or watch the sunset as we used to do. I have tried to keep busy but I find my thoughts always drift back to you. Jack I am sorry. If it was something I did I wish you would tell me. I mean very little has*

*been said in the messages we have sent to each other in the past and I feel that we need see each other and get things straight.*

*So I hope you read this that you will at least consider us meeting up. I will be on the Citadel for the next week or so with Optimus. Apparently Perceptor is having a hard time with the council (once again it is the Taurian Councilor causing trouble for him), and I heard that the Normandy will be making a visit to the station in that time so I hope to see you there partner.'*

Jack sighed as he contemplated whether or no to answer. He then highlighted the respond button and was about to press enter when the ships intercom activated.

"Commander Darby, you are required on the command deck." A female voice spoke over the the com. Jack stopped and turned off the terminal, got out of his chair and straightened his uniform.

"I'm on my way."

With that he left his quarters and headed to the CIC, leaving his thoughts of Arcee there in his quarters.

## PRIME EFFECT

Jack entered the CIC as Anderson was standing over the galaxy map. He saw Jack and beckoned him over.

"What's the situation Anderson?" Jack asked, though he still felt a little uncomfortable with that.

*'Still not used to that.'* he thought as stopped by the Captain's side.

"We are receiving a distress call from Ultra Magnus at the colony on Eden Prime." Anderson said before turning to the Yeoman.

"Put it up on the galaxy map."

"Yes sir, I have worked it through several filters as it it is highly fragmented, probably due to enemy jamming." she replied as she typed at the olo-interface of her terminal.

"Okay show us what you have Yeoman." Anderson replied as he and Jack watched the galaxy map change into the transmission as it began playing out in front of them. The image showed what appeared to be a battlefield with a man in red and blue armour talking in front of it.

"The is Ultra Magnus, Autobot leader of the wreckers. The colony is under attack from the Geth, I repeat, the Geth are attacking the colony. We are outnumbered by superior forces and need assistance. Please hurry befo..." The transmission fizzled out

and ended leaving all the bridge staff stunned. Anderson took a moment to ponder his thoughts before he straightened his uniform and composed himself.

"Hotrod, set course for Eden Prime and take us into the space bridge, set condition one throughout the ship."

With that the lights around the CIC dimmed and the alert sounded around the ship. Everyone went serious and took to their stations. Anderson turned to Jack.

"Commander I want you and Lt Cmdr Alenko to suit up and prepare to go down to the planet as soon as we arrive. I will also place another soldier on your team. Your orders are to find Ultra Magnus and the rest of the wreckers and find out why the Geth are attacking the colony and help in any way you can."

"Yes of course Anderson." Jack replied as he saluted the Captain.

"We will be the first ship on the scene. I know the Alliance will have be sending other ships too but we have to do what we can in the mean time." Anderson continued as he turned from Jack and walked away to the cockpit.

"Do you duty Commander." Anderson finished and Jack nodded and turned to leave the CIC via the elevator.

With that the Normandy flew up to the space bridge as it came to life with a massive bright portal expanding in all directions out of the device before the ship took off into it and out into the galaxy at beyond the speed of light.

## Kapitel 2:

*[Dieses Kapitel ist nur Volljährigen zugänglich]*

## Kapitel 3:

### CHAPTER III

The Reapers are coming. That one sentence kept repeating in Jack's mind as he was surrounded by darkness. Usually he would be at peace with nothing around him while he slept, but this time was different. He had just been given a vision by an artefact that was built by an ancient race called the Lithone who had been wiped out 100,000 years prior by giant black ships which he assumed were the Reapers that the vision warned him of. But he found that the darkness around was not comforting, but cold and fearful and he wished that there was someone there to banish the loneliness he was feeling at this time, to tell him that everything was going to be alright.

He wished Arcee was with him. If there was one person in this life that could make him feel better, that could reassure him with the simplest of actions, such as smile it was his partner. But she wasn't there and that was his fault. Again he was reminded of that which he had pushed away all those years ago when he left. He wouldn't make that mistake again. He would fight to have her back in his life if necessary, and fight this new threat any way he could. But first he had to wake up. He willed himself to break free of the darkness around him and slowly but surely the darkness rescinded, replaced by light as he slowly opened his eyes and took a breath.

The brightness of the lights in the room dimmed as he eyes readjusted giving him chance to view his surroundings. He looked around and found himself to be lying on a bed in a room he did not recognize. A woman walked over to his bed side and looked down at him and smiled.

"I see your back with us Commander." she said in a friendly tone. He reached up with his left hand and rubbed his eyes as he tried to sit up, but then felt a hand on his shoulder gently stopping him.

"Easy, you have been unconscious for nearly four hours since you were brought on board"

Jack listened to her and lied back down. The woman went over to a work station and activated the com link.

"Captain Anderson, Darby is awake." she said. "You can come and see him now"

"Acknowledged Doctor Chakwas, I'll be down right away" came Anderson's voice over the com. The Doctor then returned to Jack who was starting to feel fidgety.

"Can I get up now?" he asked a little irritably.

"So you are one of those sort of patients then are you?" she asked jokingly. Jack looked at her confused. Now that his eyes were focused again, he could see the woman more clearly. She was a Caucasian woman in her mid fifties, but looked like



she looked good for her age. Obviously she had taken good care of herself through her life. Jack could only hope that when he, or rather if he ever got to that age that he would look at least as healthy as she did.

"What kind?" he asked curiously.

"The kind that I will have to strap down to this bed to make sure that they don't move until I say that they can." she remarked.

Jack shrugged and looked at her.

"Can I at least sit up, it feels like I have been lying down for long enough." Chakwas looked at him and then finally admitted defeat.

"Fine sit up, but don't get off that bed."

Jack then raised himself into a sitting position with his legs hanging off the side of the bed.

"Now that's better." he said feeling a little better. Chakwas then activated her holo-tool and ran it over the Commander, taking readings.

"So I take it your Doctor Chakwas, the ship's head physician." he asked, to which she nodded back whilst continuing to take scans.

"Yes, and you are Commander Jack Darby, the Captain's new XO. It's a pleasure to finally meet you. I thought you would have at least seen me before you had gone off on a mission first mind you."

Jack smiled at her.

"Sorry Doctor, when I looked around the ship earlier I would have seen you, but I was told you weren't here at the time."

"No, I was in the cockpit, treating Hotrod's headache." she replied, the irritation evident in her voice.

"Wait, Hotrod gets headaches, but he's Cybertronian. How does he get headaches?" he asked, his curiosity now peaking.

"Well the Cybertronians may be using pretender bodies now, but those bodies are bio mechanical in nature and were designed to mimic human physiology perfectly. So they are now susceptible to most none lethal ailments that we deal with everyday."

Jack was about to reply with another question when Anderson entered the Infirmary and stood next to him.

"How are you Jack?" he asked, once again in the informal way that Jack himself was still trying to get used to.

"I'm fine si....Anderson"

He did it again, but if the Captain had noticed, he didn't let it show.

"No self diagnosis please, let the Doctor do her job if you can?" Chakwas jumped in. She had just finished her scans and deactivated her Holo-tool as both men looked at her.

"Sorry Doctor, how is he?" Anderson asked.

"Well he is fine, physically and mentally. Whatever that energy was that hit him, has not damaged or effected him in any way that I can detect."

"Thank you Doctor." Anderson replied. Chakwas nodded and turned to Jack.

"You may return to duty Commander." she told him before turning and walking away.

"It was nice meeting you Doctor" Jack said with a smile, making her turn to him and return the smile before she carried on to her station. Jack then looked back at Anderson, who had a look of worry on his face.

"What happened to you when the Artifact hit you with that energy?"

Jack looked at Anderson and shook his head.

"I'm not entirely sure, I believe it showed me a vision, if that's the best way to describe it."

The Captain didn't take his eyes off Jack, listening to his every word.

"What did it show you?"

Jack closed his eyes and tried to remember the images that it showed him.

"I was standing in the ruins of a city with thousands of bodies lying around me, and then I saw a number ships that looked like that unknown ship that attacked the colony with the Geth. Then I heard a voice, and it said that I had just witnessed their end and ours was getting closer. The Reapers are coming. And then that was it."

Anderson saw Jacks face go slightly pale as he described the vision.

"You think that giant black ship is what the vision was warning you of?"

"I'm not sure, but whatever it was, it was certainly powerful." Jack concluded.

"Well we will be arriving at the Citadel in the next few hours. The Council has requested us to give them a report on the Eden Prime incident. I think it is because one of our people has pointed the finger at Saren Arterius, the Council's most famous

Spectre." Jack gave Anderson a determined look.

"Hey, I may not have known Private Verner long, but it was long enough to know that he is no liar. If he said that it was Saren working with the Geth, then I believe him."

"Agreed, but we just have to hope that we can convince the Council of that." Anderson replied before turning to leave.

"Anderson, how are the others?" Jack asked gaining the Captain's attention again.

"Gunnery Chief Nakadia and Wheeljack are over in the common room. They have been quiet ever since we brought Ultra Magnus's body onboard. As for Lt. Cmdr Alenko, he was last seen down on the cargo bay. I had told them not visit you until you had been checked out, but since there is nothing to worry about, maybe you should see them before we reach the Citadel."

Jack nodded and got off the bed and walked out of the Infirmary with Anderson before heading to the common room.

## PRIME EFFECT

Jack entered the Common room, it wasn't much really, just some tables with chairs as well as two sofas, one at each end of the room. He saw Miko and Wheeljack sitting opposite each other looking rather sullen.

"Hey guys" he said sheepishly as he walked over to them. Miko's face lit up as she darted over and gave him a hug.

"Jack, thank god you are alright, we thought you would never wake up."

After the embrace, they both sat down with Wheeljack.

"Yeah well some of us weren't so lucky." Jack replied sheepishly.

Wheeljack's eyes narrowed at the Commander's comment.

"Yeah well that will change as soon as I see that Turian bastard again. 'I'll carve Magnus's name into his chest as he dies."

Jack knew that Wheeljack and Ultra Magnus had a long history that started long before the war for Cybertron, but he could see where this was heading.

"Yeah, all we need to do is wait for that Turian to show his ugly mug and then put a bullet through it." Miko added enthusiastically.

Jack looked down at the table annoyed.

"Yeah because that worked well the last time didn't it." he muttered under his breath.

Miko having heard that looked at Jack.

"What did you just say?"

The Commander looked up to see both of them staring at him.

"Well remember Bulkhead and Hardshell." he said.

Both sets of eyes widened at the mention of Bulkhead's name and then narrowed at him as anger started to appear on their faces. Jack knew that Bulkhead was a sore subject, even after all these years, but he also knew he had to put an end to what ever they had planned so he continued.

"You killed Hardshell for what he did to Bulkhead, but what did it accomplish? It didn't help him did it, Bulkhead still died."

Wheeljack clenched his fist and slammed it into the table as his finally let his anger get the better of him. But rather than let the wrecker scare him, Jack stared directly at him. His face stoic and his eyes determined.

"Anger will not change that fact Wheeljack. Now if you want to remain on this ship and help me bring Saren to justice for what he did then I will happily accept your help. But I don't need nor want anyone on my team who as score to settle."

Wheeljack suddenly felt small in front of the human staring at him. God did this guy remind him of Prime. Jack then turned to Miko who was just staring at him, eyes wide, mouth slightly open. She had never seen Jack like this. She could now see why he now held the rank of Commander, and she suddenly felt a little better for realizing it.

"Same goes for you too."

Miko nodded as Jack got up, slid his chair back under the table and walked out the room.

When Jack reached the cargo bay he found Kaidan leaning against the shuttle with a bottle of what looked like whisky.

"I hope you are not planning on drinking all of that now, especially since we are still on duty." Jack asked. Kaidan looked down at the bottle and then back at Jack with a slight but sad smile on his face.

"Na, I was actually waiting for you to turn up. Glad to see your up and about." he said.

Jack stood beside him, arms crossed.

"So I'm here, what's up Kaidan?"

Kaidan bent down to a box he had next to his feet and pulled two glasses out of it and handed them to Jack.

"Well I thought we should share a drink in honour of Conrad."

Jack held the glasses as Kaidan opened the bottle and poured a small amount into both glasses, before putting the bottle down and accepting one of the glasses from Jack.

"He was certainly an interesting guy wasn't he? With the motion sickness and his strange ability of attracting bugs to bite him." Kaidan said, earning a chuckle from the Commander, reminding him of those particular moments.

"Yeah, as well as his fascination with me." Jack replied.

"Well the guy had a good taste in role models didn't he." Kaidan said casually.

Jack rolled his eyes at the comment. Again it made him feel uncomfortable, Kaidan noticed again and chose now to voice his concern.

"That really bothers you doesn't it?"

Jack looked back at Kaidan and nodded.

"I guess that maybe I just don't feel like I deserve it." the Commander replied as he looked down at his drink.

"I mean there are plenty of other people out there that deserve that kind of attention."

Kaidan looked at his friend who was still looking away and thought about what he was going to say next, then smiled.

"Well its not every day that you discover an alien race, befriend them and then help defend the planet. Or even all the things you have done after you joined the defence force. But I tell you now, I know you deserve it. There aren't many people out there with the ability to inspire those around them the way you can Jack, and Conrad knew that too. Your exploits inspired him to join up and become part of something that was bigger than himself. You inspired those young men back at New Terra. Hell, you even inspire me Jack and I know you." he said with a smile on his face. Jack looked back to his friend, a lopsided grin growing on his face.

"Thanks Kaidan." he replied. He then raised his glass.

"To Conrad Verner."

Kaidan raised his too.

"To Conrad." he replied, before both men then downed their drinks in one go. Jack

started coughing as the strength of the whiskey hit him.

"That's good stuff." he coughed.

"Yeah it sure is." Kaidan replied chuckling at his friend's discomfort.

"It's the Doc's, I sort of borrowed it while her back was turned. I intend on giving it back."

Jack having recovered, looked at him and shook his head at his friends confession.

"Still the same old Kaidan."

### **PRIME EFFECT**

The Normandy exited the giant green portal of the space bridge and flew towards the colossal Citadel station as it sat nestled inside the gases of the serpent nebula. Jack observed the station from his room's window. He had seen many wonders during his life, and yet found he could still be surprised. The station was a marvel to behold, the nerve centre of galactic politics for the last several centuries as well as a massive city, home to over thirteen billion people from all over the galaxy.

Now he was there to see the council and hopefully convince them that one of their most trusted Spectres had betrayed the values that they had entrusted him with. Jack knew that this was going to be a tough pill for them to swallow. Not only was it unthinkable, but the fact that it was humans pointing the finger too was not something they could tolerate. After all the Council saw humanity as a very young and brash race, not unlike Ratchet when he first met Jack and his friends. But they had managed to change the medic's view and Jack hoped that he could do the same for the council.

After the Normandy docked. The crew disembarked, Miko and Wheeljack heading for a club called Purgatory, obviously wanting to have a drink after the scolding the Commander had given them. Jack though was heading for the Council Embassies with Anderson and Kaidan. They had been told by a C-Sec officer that the Earth's political representative wanted to speak to them before he took them to meet the council.

After an elevator ride that felt like it lasted forever, they found themselves in the office of Donnel Udina. He had been chosen to be Earth's voice at the Citadel. Optimus Prime had not been in favour of this choice due to the man's obvious ambition for power. A trait that Optimus saw in Megatron when they used to be friends, but he let it pass due to Earth's leaders having the right to choose who should speak for them.

Jack saw the man standing next to the large windows that showed the rest of the presidium below them. Udina looked like a man that always had a lot on his mind. He turned to the three of them and he did not look happy.

"So Captain Anderson, I would say that it is a pleasure to see you again but that is not the case is it. Especially with the shit storm that you have brought with you." he said in dry tone underlined with a hint of anger.

"No I guess its not Donnel, but what we have to say to the Council is nothing but the truth." The Captain responded. Udina then looked at the Jack and Kaidan.

"So this is this must by Commander Darby. The one pointing the finger at the Council's precious Spectre."

Jack looked at him, the Commander's remaining stoic and calm.

"it's the truth, Saren attacked Eden Prime with the Geth and murdered two of our friends."

Udina looked like he was having none of it as he waved off what Jack had just said.

"You do know that those alien arse-holes will not believe you, and I would rather keep my position if it is all the same to you."

Anderson walked right up to Udina and looked down at the old fool.

"I don't particularly care for you Donnel, I never really have. But if you are through with all the self whining, we would appreciate it if you took us to the Council now."

Udina did not know where to look, but shrugged and beckoned them to follow him.

## PRIME EFFECT

Elsewhere on the Citadel, Optimus stood and looked out at the cityscape before him. Whenever he visited the station, he would always take the time to visit this spot and take in the view. After all it reminded him of Iacon, the city where he lived before the war that destroyed Cybertron all those millennia ago had happened. Back then he was a young clerk that went by the name of Orion Pax. Sometimes when remembering how simple life was back then, he found himself wishing that his life was still the way it was before he became a Prime. But unfortunately for him, fate rarely calls at a moment of their own choosing and what followed was meant to happen. The war that ultimately led to the fall of Cybertron and the exodus to Earth. And then only for the Decepticons to follow in their wake and prolong the war, with the future of the planet's original inhabitants at risk.

But Optimus had found that the humans of Earth were not as easy targets for the Decepticons to conquer as Megatron himself foolishly believed. Because from that fateful day that the Autobots had met the three teens that had become like family to them in so short a time, Optimus could see what humans were capable of. There was Rafael who though was still very young, was so smart for his age, that he even gave

Ratchet a run for his money though the medic never liked to admit it. Then there was Miko, she had an energy that never seemed to stop. She was impulsive and quick to action without a second thought. That many times caused the Autobots problems, but she had a strong and caring heart and still offered much to earth's newest residents.

Then there was Jack, if ever there was a person who the Prime would be proud to call a son it was him. For the young man was very much like Optimus, compassionate and courageous. He was always on hand to help whenever the Autobots had needed him. Then there was his friendship with Arcee, Optimus's SIC. Optimus had heard that she was not one for company after she lost her partner Tailgate. But when Cliffjumper had brought her to their base on Earth, he noticed that the femme had started to soften around the young Autobot warrior. Then that changed the day he was killed by Starscream. And she closed herself off from her family again, until she met Jack. And slowly but surely Jack's caring and compassionate nature managed to bring Arcee out of the dark and back into the light and their friendship strengthened as a result. Yes Jack was indeed a Prime in the making, even if the young man did not want to accept it, just like Optimus hadn't.

"Well I knew I would find you up here." a female voice said that caught Optimus's attention, making him turn to where it was coming from. There he saw a young woman walking up to him. She had pale soft skin and electric blue eyes. Her hair was blue with pink highlights that came down to halfway down her neck, and she was wearing a pair of jeans and a black T-shirt that complemented her athletic figure. Unlike most Cybertronians, Arcee did have a liking for human clothing. She stopped next to Optimus and looked out at the view, a happy smile on her face. Obviously she was happy and looking forward to seeing Jack after having received his message a few hours before that said they would meet up and she sure wasn't going to hide it.

"Well I like the view up here" the Prime answered.

"I can see why." she replied as she looked out at the city in front of her with the cabs flying past, going too an fro. Optimus then noted the time on his holo-tool and turned to the femme.

"Well now that you are here, we can head to the Council chambers in the presidium tower. Jack and Captain Anderson will be presenting their case against the Spectre Saren Arterius to the council members."

"Yeah sure." she replied happily. And the two of them made their way to the nearest elevator. As they walked through the garden like area around them, Optimus noted how this was the first time in years that he had seen his SIC this happy. He still did not know the reasons for her and Jack's uneasiness with each other and why the young man had chosen to take up the Prime's suggestion all those years ago. But he wasn't going to pry, he would wait for them to open up to him when they felt ready to do so. Of course their seeing each other here on the station could also bring their problems to a close and that would also be good.

"So how are you Optimus? Ratchet told me that the Quarian situation had gotten a bit strenuous." Arcee asked seeing the thoughtful look on his face.



"I wish I could say that it was a minor misunderstanding Arcee. But one of our transports had gotten too close to their Flotilla and they sent out some of their patrol fleet to warn our ships away. It would seem that they still do not trust us."

Arcee looked at him confused, trying to read the Prime's thoughts.

"But why, we are nothing like the Geth. Those robots were built by them, we didn't have the same kind of origin as them, hell we weren't built by anyone." she questioned, irritation evident in her voice.

"I tried to reason with them as such when I spoke to Admiral Raan over the com channel back at New Iacon. But she wouldn't have it, she said that if one of our ships ever happened to be in the same system as their flotilla, then it would be destroyed. I fear that we may never be able to gain their friendship."

Arcee saw the disappointment in the Prime's face and thought it was best to try and cheer him up.

"Come on, let's go see Jack and watch him show those Councillors whose boss."

The Prime looked down at the femme and saw the infectious smile that had appeared on her face and could not help but smile back. He nodded and the two of them entered the elevator and headed up to the Council Chambers in the tower above them.

## Kapitel 4:

### CHAPTER IV

As Optimus and Arcee entered the Citadel Tower, Arcee was amazed by the beauty of the gardens and fountains that made up the area that lead to the Council chamber. As she looked around she saw many people of different races walking around the area or sitting on the benches talking to one another. She unintentionally overheard a conversation between a Turian and Salarian discussing the chances of a Volus getting a seat on the council.

"No chance there." the Salarian replied.

"The Volus would need a ladder to reach the seat." gaining a laugh of approval from the Turian. Arcee frowned at the remark. She didn't like people who made fun of others for their differences, no matter what they were.

For her back on Cybertron it was due to her lack of height back when she had her old body. The bots would make fun of her and she always snapped back at them. She was temperamental that way. But when the war started she used what many considered to be weakness to great effect as a sharpshooter and scout, being able to sneak in and out of places undetected was an advantage that the Autobots could not afford to waste.

And also with her combat training curtesy of Prowl. Who was a master of circuit-su, the Cybertronian equivalent of martial arts. Arcee became a weapon of war on the battlefield. He taught her to use her small size and quick speed to devastate those who were larger and slower than her, and as time went on she did just that. But she wasn't the only one to prove true her belief, there was also Jack who time and again during the twilight years of the war proved how much of a danger they could be to those who underestimated them.

When they were further away from the pair of idiots as Arcee thought of them, she caught sight of a monument in the center of the main garden display. If she was not mistaken, it looked just like a space bridge.

"I see you recognize it Arcee." Optimus observed as she studied the monument.

"Why would they have monument to space bridges here?" the femme asked.

"No one really knows, since it has always been here since the Citadel was discovered by the Asari several hundred years ago."

He was about to continue talking when they saw that the Council meeting was about to start and so headed on in.

When they entered the council chamber, Optimus and Arcee found a spot on one of

the upper floors and stood at the balcony which gave them a great view of the whole chamber. As the femme looked around, seeing that quite an audience had gathered for this meeting, looking down from adjacent balcony's on the other side of the chamber. She looked down to see the Councillors themselves standing at their podium. There was an Asari, a Turian and a Salarian and of course she would recognise Perceptor, who was the Cybertronian Councillor. He looked like he didn't want to be there and when she looked up at Optimus, she noticed the same worry on his face as he looked down at the other Councillors.

"Whats wrong?" she asked.

"I can already see that this will not go well Arcee, I can tell that just by looking at Perceptor."

The femme was about to speak when from the corner of her eye she spotted someone. A young man she would never forget, he was dressed in the standard alliance uniform and he looked rather good in it if she did say so herself. It was her partner, her Jack.

Jack walked into the Council chambers with both Anderson in front and Kaiden to his left and Udina following behind them. They crossed the bridge to the box in the centre of the chamber as the Council members stood before them. The massive pane glass window behind them bathed the councillors in light, almost making the four of them look like gods up there on their podium. Jack remembered back to Arcee's stories of the High Council back on Cybertron before the war, they too were described as just as illustrious. But he wasn't going to be intimidated here, he had a job to do and he was going to see it through.

"The council would like to welcome you to this meeting Captain Anderson." Tevos the Asari Councillor said trying to sound as pleasant as possible.

"Thank you for seeing us today madam Councillor." the Captain replied. But before he could say anymore, the Turian councillor jumped in.

"Can we stop with the pleasantries and get down to the reason why this meeting was called for today." Sparatus said.

"Yes we would really like to know why you believe that a Spectre as honourable as Saren Arterius would commit an atrocity like what happened at Eden Prime." Valern the Salarian Councillor asked.

"Councillors, please show some restraint and give them some room to breath before you start attacking them with questions." Perceptor said trying to use reason, earning a glare from Sparatus.

"Why, how would you feel if someone came in and tried to blame a heinous crime on your own Optimus Prime, I have every right to be angry. Saren is a good friend of my mine and I will not see his name being tarnished by humans."

The Asari councillor turned to the Turian.

"Then maybe you should exclude yourself from this meeting? We should at least hear them out first, no matter how ridiculous their claims may lead to be."

Jack looked up at the councillors bickering between each other and couldn't help but smile slightly. Doesn't matter if you are on Earth or at the far end of the galaxy, politics was politics wherever you went.

"Very well, please come forward and deliver you evidence." Sparatus said after he calmed down.

With that Jack stepped forward.

"And who are you?" Sparatus asked not even trying to hide the disinterest in his voice.

"Commander Jack Darby, Alliance Military." the young man answered stoically.

"Welcome Commander, please give us your account of what happened." Tevos encouraged in a friendly manner.

So Jack and then Kaiden began giving their accounts of what happened on Eden Prime, from the landing on the planet and battling the Geth to the mysterious black ship that appeared over the colony, the latter being dismissed as a Geth ship.

Arcee looked down from the balcony with Optimus as the meeting continued, watching as Jack gave his account of the events. He was so confident and mature, not that he wasn't always like that. It was just that he seemed so much more sure of himself. She found herself entranced by Jack as he talked, a feeling coming over her that she had not felt in a long time. Not since the night he left, and she still was not entirely sure what the feeling was.

Optimus had noticed the femme's attention had been solely on Jack this entire time and smiled. He finally started putting the pieces together to the puzzle that was Jack and Arcee. He knew that they had been extremely close, but seeing this behaviour from his SIC had confirmed it. The only mystery now left to solve was what had happened between them years ago. He opened his mouth to speak to the femme, when he noticed her relaxed face suddenly become serious as she looked out to the other side of the chamber.

"What is it Arcee?" the Prime asked.

"You see that Turian over there, the one in the blue and black armour. Isn't he acting like he has a lot riding on this meeting?" she asked.

Optimus looked over to see a Turian with blue face paint and a visor over his left eye. He was watching the meeting below and did not look happy with how it was proceeding. And after a few more minutes he had had enough and walked out. Optimus turned back to the femme.

"Yes Arcee, he did look somewhat disturbed by the proceedings." They both looked back down to the council meeting below them, Arcee's attention returning to Jack.

"That is the most ridiculous story I have ever heard and you don't even have any real proof." Sparatus spat back at Anderson and Jack as the two of them stood there looking back at him.

"Please calm down, this isn't getting us anywhere." Perceptor pleaded. But the Turian was having none of it.

"I would have to agree with Sparatus, Captain Anderson and Commander Darby unless you can bring us real evidence to back up your claims, then there is nothing we can do. I am sorry, and this concludes this Council meeting."

And with that, the councillors started to leave, the Turian storming out first. Perceptor was about to leave but not before looking back at the humans and giving them a sympathetic look and then like the others he was gone. The audience that had watched the whole thing had upped and left too, leaving just Optimus and Arcee who watched as the human trio turned and left in defeat.

"Come Arcee, we shall go and offer our support to Jack and the others" the Prime said. Arcee nodded and the two left the now empty Chamber.

Once outside and back in the calming environment of the gardens, Anderson turned to his two officers.

"Well that went well" he said trying not to sound too sarcastic.

"Your telling me, they were never going to believe us in the first place. Which made this whole meeting a waste of time." Kaiden replied, not even hiding his anger.

"Well until we have solid evidence, I guess there is nothing we can do" Anderson said.

Jack stayed quiet the entire time the two were talking, trying to think of something that could help them. He was about to speak up when another voice was suddenly heard from behind him.

"Maybe I can be of some help?"

The three of them looked over to see a Turian approach them. He was wearing C-Sec armour and had a visor covering his left eye.

"And you would be?" Kaiden asked.

"Garrus Vakarian, I am with Citadel Security."

The three men looked at the new arrival, trying to work out whether this was real or not. But Jack stepped forward and offered the Turian his hand.

"I'm Commander Jack Darby." he said in a friendly tone and with a slight smile.

"it's good to meet you Commander." he replied as he noticed Kaiden staring at him with distrust.

"I guess you would like to hear how I can help."

"Oh we are all ears" Kaiden remarked sarcastically. Jack glared at him, making the Lt Cmdr suddenly feel very small. This had not gone unnoticed by Anderson who watched as his XO and the Turian began to talk.

"Well how can you help us then?" Jack asked. Garrus activated his holo-tool and showed them a number of reports.

"Well I was recently running an investigation into the Spectre Saren Arterius, due to some very disturbing reports of his activities in the Terminus systems, but I found that I was being blocked at nearly every turn. You know sometimes giving Spectres free reign across the galaxy can be a real pain in the ass. Especially when that Spectre is playing everyone for fools"

"What makes you say that?" Jack replied. Garrus showed them some more intel on his holo-tool's screen.

"Well like I said, I keep getting blocked at every turn, but there just is something not right about that Spectre. But I do have one lead."

"What's that then?" Jack asked, his attention fully on what Garrus was telling them.

"I know a Krogan Bounty hunter, who goes by the name of Wrex down on the lower levels, he has come across some information about Saren."

"Well what kind of information?" Kaiden asked.

"He wouldn't say over the com, he would rather meet face to face and down on the lower levels. And with how C-Sec doesn't have that much control down there. I feel it would be better to go down in greater numbers than just one." Garrus told them honestly, which then made Jack turn to Anderson.

"Captain, I think this worth investigating."

"I agree Commander, okay you and Alenko will assist Mr Vakarian here in getting that proof and bring it back to the council while I head back to the Normandy and report the days events to our superiors" Anderson replied as he gave them a supportive smile, before turning around and heading to the transport back to the Presidium.

Garrus then stopped the two men as they were about to head to the transit hub.

"What is it Garrus?" Jack asked confused.

Garrus looked them both up and down.

"Don't you two think you two should be wearing something a little less conspicuous, Alliance military types are not well known for walking around with the lowlifes."

"Well what about you, don't tell me that you can go in dressed like that?" Kaiden asked surprised. Garrus gave him a knowing smile.

"Well its like I said, a C-Sec officer isn't even a blip on the radar of the guys down there, maybe because my superiors are busy being paid off by them..." he answered, the last part had a tinge of anger to it.

"...but if we come across any trouble, I can easily handle it myself."

"That's good to know..." Jack replied with smile.

"..okay if you know where we can get clothes to better blend in with the lowlifes down there, then lets get going."

"I know just the place." Garrus finished as the two humans followed him to the transit station.

Optimus and Arcee had just re-entered the gardens when they noticed Jack, Alenko and that Turian from earlier get into a cab and watch it fly off to another part of the Citadel.

"Well that is unfortunate." The Prime said sadly. He then looked at Arcee and noticed the intent in her eyes as she looked at the transit station.

"You want to go and help Jack don't you?" Optimus said bluntly, causing the femme to look up surprised.

"Am I that easy to read?"

"Not at all Arcee, but I do know you well enough to see when you have made your mind up about something." he replied as he smiled at her. She sighed as his words hit home within her spark.

"Yes I want to help Jack, I want to help my partner." she answered truthfully.

"Then I will take my leave and go and see Captain Anderson." the Prime replied as he turned and walked away before turning to his SIC one last time.

"Arcee, be careful and good luck."

She smiled and nodded at the Prime, her smile saying a silent thank you to her friend and Commander before heading off to the transit station to follow her partner where ever he was going.

## PRIME EFFECT

The trip in the transit cab was not a very relaxing one for Arcee. Mainly due to the fact that she spent the whole time thinking about Jack. As she looked out of the side window at the sky scrapers that flew by as the cab followed the same path as Jack's one, she thought about how much he had changed since the last time she had seen him. Well she was thinking of the very last time she had seen him years ago, but she did recently attend his promotion ceremony, where he was given a medal for his part in the defence of New Terra and was also promoted to Commander. It had surprised Arcee how fast it had taken Jack to rise up the ranks.

For herself it had taken several vorn to reach the rank of commander. So for the young man to reach it in a fraction of the time was something to be proud of. If only she had gone up to meet him then and tell him how proud of him she was. But at that moment she felt that if she was to surprise him like the way she had the night he had left, that it would have ended in a similar fashion. Remembering that night made her spark ache, so she did her best to expel those thoughts from her mind as she looked out at the city expanding down one of the arms of the Citadel. It growing larger as the cab descended into it.

Down in the under city of the Citadel, two men and a Turian walked down one of the many dark and trodden streets that littered the foundations of the massive station. As they walked through the crowded streets, the two men did not look any different from anyone else that was there. Kaiden was wearing a baggy pair of jeans and a grey hoodie, while Jack was wearing a similar set of jeans, but instead of a hoodie, he wore a dark green T-shirt with a black biker jacket. Kaiden gave Jack jealous look.

"Why did you get first choice?" he asked. Jack looked over to him and gave him a lopsided grin.

"Maybe because I am the Commander."

Kaiden muttered something that Jack did not hear clearly, and just assumed that it was an insult. But he just ignored it and looked ahead to Garrus, who was still wearing his C-Sec armour. But true to his word, no one around here had even batted an eye lid at him.

*'I guess the lowlifes really do run things down here.'* he thought to himself as he looked around him to all the shady people that were crowding the streets.

"So where are we going exactly?" Jack asked to the Turian in front of him.

"Well, Wrex told me to meet him at the End of Days club just down this street."

"We are meeting him at a bar?" Jack asked curious about the location. Kaiden having heard Garrus perked up.



"You read my mind, I was just thinking that I would rather be drinking after what we just went through upstairs". Garrus chose to ignore the man and carried on talking to Jack.

"Well he is a Krogan and he likes watching the dancers, plus it is about the only bar left on the Citadel that hasn't banned him."

"Charming." Jack replied as they came up to the entrance to the bar. It was covered in violet and blue neon lights and had two Batarian bouncers guarding the doors. Garrus turned to Kaiden and Jack to do some final checking.

"Now you both have the pistols I gave you right?" he said while looking like he was handing out credits to both of them as the bouncers looked over curiously.

"Yeah we have them hidden, think we will need them?" Jack asked as he pretended to accept the creds from his Turian friend.

"Hard to say, Right then shall we?"

With that Garrus and the humans walked past the bouncers and into the club. Not a second had past that another group of men, well armed by the looks of them walked out from the shadows and entered the club after them. Had they checked their surroundings first, they may have noticed a pair of electric blue eyes that had been watching them from further in the shadows, a stern look growing on her face. Only one thought entering her mind. 'Jack!'

If it looked like the place was crowded on the outside, then it was heaving inside. There was barely room to breath let alone move as Jack, Kaiden and Garrus tried to squeeze past all the bodies in the club. The neon lighting inside was almost as bad as it was outside. It was starting to give Jack a headache. He would rather spend a quiet night watching the sunset than have his eyes and ears physically abused by the lights and sounds of these types of places. The music was a one note, tone deaf assault on the senses.

He was suddenly pulled from his thoughts when Garrus tapped him on the shoulder and pointed to the large Krogan in red armour sitting at a table with an Asari Dancer on top of it, holding onto the pole going through the middle of the table. He was drooling over the girl as she thrust herself into the pole before bending over backwards and smiling at the hulking brute while giving him a good view of her large breasts that were nearly bursting out of her skin tight outfit.

"Very nice." he slobbered as Garrus and Jack approached his table with Kaiden behind them.

Wrex then spotted the group as they neared, his reptilian eyes narrowing until he recognised the Turian and smiled.

"Garrus, you old pyjak." he said as the dancer noticed the group and decided to leave,

taking a tip from the Krogan before disappearing into the crowd.

Both men shook hands before Garrus took a seat next to him.

"I figured you would have been kicked out of this place by now, going by your current track record."

The Krogan gave a hearty laugh.

"Yeah well that doesn't usually happen until I am on the eighth bottle of Ryncol, then I start trying to touch the dancers."

Garrus looked over Jack and grinned.

"Its true, he is like a newborn baby, hands everywhere." Garrus joked, gaining a slight smile from Jack. Wrex looked over at the strangers.

"Garrus, who are these pink skins?"

Jack offered the Krogan his hand.

"I'm Commander Jack Darby" he said with a smile. The Krogan just looked at it and scoffed, making Jack feel a little nervous.

"Hey these guys are okay, in fact they are with me because of the intel you have on Saren."

The Krogan suddenly looked serious as he looked around them before speaking.

"Well it's not so much intel as it is a person."

"What do you mean?" Jack asked, edging closer.

"Well I ran into this Quarian a few days back, poor thing looked like she had been running for a long time. She saw me and probably thought that I could protect her and so asked for my help. She said that she had stumbled onto some information while on her pilgrimage. Then next thing she knew, she was being chased by mercenaries."

Jack and Kaiden listened to every word that Wrex told them before speaking.

"So where is she, we could really use the information she has."

Wrex pointed up.

"She's upstairs, I have been hiding her here since I found her. Gave her some first aid too, since she had been shot when I found her."

Jack stood up and tidied himself up.

"Can you take us to her now. We can pay you whatever fee you want and place her into protective custody once we get her back to the presidium."

The Krogan looked both men up and down and scoffed again.

"You, what makes you think you can protect her?"

Garrus nudged Wrex's shoulder and whispered something into his ear.

"That's him, the hero of New Terra and the man that helped kill the Decepticon leader Megatron."

"Well now, why didn't you just tell me that to start with." he chuckled as he got up and lead the three of them up the stairs. He lead them to another room that was only half the size of the club below and they saw the Quarian sitting at a table, her body language looking rather nervous. This was the first time that Jack had seen a Quarian. She was wearing a black and purple enviro-suit with purple hood covering her breather helmet that had a purple glass visor covering her face. Only her white eyes were visible and they looked directly at the new comers.

"What's going on Wrex, who are these people?" she asked, fear in her voice.

"Don't worry, they are here to help get you someplace safe." Wrex said gently as Jack walked up to her, extending his hand.

"I'm Commander Jack Darby and this is Lt. Cmdr Kaiden Alenko of the Alliance, we are here to take you into protective custody miss.."

She looked at both men for a moment.

"Tali..... Tali'Zorah nar Raya" she replied as she took his hand and stood up. Jack then turned to Wrex and Garrus.

"Is there a faster way out of here than the way we came in. I don't think that would good idea to go back, especially if the men that are after Miss Raya here are still out there?" he reasoned as the Quarian looked at Jack.

"Please call me Tali." she insisted, Jack smiled back in return.

"Okay Tali." he said gently before returning to the others.

"So is there another way out of here?"

Garrus shrugged and Wrex rolled his eyes at the Turian in amazement before walking over to the back wall and pushing against it. Causing it to open up revealing a hidden exit.

"I noticed that this was here the last time I stayed, obviously the new owners never figured it out."

Jack smirked as he offered Tali his hand, which she gratefully took and lead her through the hidden exit onto a balcony outside. Kaiden saw a mechanised ladder and activated it, making it extend all the way to the ground. Kaiden then climbed down first followed by Garrus, then Tali and finally Jack and Wrex. They then started to head away from the club when armed Batarians and Humans appeared out of the shadows and surrounded them. They were wearing the white and blue armour of the Blue suns mercenary group. Jack and the others equipped their own weapons and stood in a circle with Tali in the middle, out of view of the newcomers.

"Give us the Quarian and you can walk away." the lead Batarian offered dryly as he signaled his men to walk closer to the group, weapons armed.

"Why, who hired you to take her out?" Jack asked not taking his aim off the leader.

"That's none of your concern alliance scum. We have been tracking you since you entered the under city, we knew that you would lead us directly to the girl. Now hand her over to us, or this will end bloody for you."

Jack glanced over to Garrus who was holding what looked like a grenade in his right hand and nodded slightly.

"That sounds like a good deal, but I have a better one. How about you let us pass and you don't leave the Citadel in body bags." Jack answered coolly.

The leader gritted his teeth as he lost his cool and yelled at his men to fire at them.

"Garrus now." Jack ordered as the Turian threw the grenade into the air where it exploded bathing the entire area in a white light.

Before the light had a chance to fade, Jack and the others killed the mercs before they had a chance to recover, leaving only the leader left standing. Once he had recovered his sight he looked around to see his men scattered around on the floor before his eyes landed on Jack standing in front of him, gun pointed at his face.

"Now how about we make a new deal, where you get to keep your life?" he asked calmly, his face remaining stoic. But to his surprise the leader chuckled which completely threw Jack off.

"What's so funny?" Kaiden asked stepping forward.

The leader looked up to the balcony and smiled, making the group look up too to see three more mercs standing over them, guns trained on the group. The leader then loosened up and held out his hand.

"Give me the gun?" he said to Jack as several more mercs appeared around them.

"And the rest of you drop your weapons, I want ask again."

Jack looked back at the others and nodded. Each one dropped their pistols as Tali looked around panicking.

"Oh keelah." she said under her breath.

"You didn't think that I wouldn't have back up did you?" the leader gloated at Jack as he walked forward towards Tali. Jack glanced over to the new men on the ground with them. They were not carrying firearms like the others earlier or the ones now on the Balcony. They were only armed with combat knives. He looked over to Garrus and Wrex who looked back at him like they were all on the same page.

*'If there was only a way to take out the gunmen on the balcony then these guys would be no trouble.'* he thought to himself as the leader grabbed Tali by the arm and dragged her away from Jack and his friends.

"It was nice doing business with you" the leader gloated as walked past Jack with Tali.

"Kill them!" he ordered to his men as Tali tried to break free of his grip.

"NO!" she screamed as she anticipated the mercs gunshots. But after a moment nothing came.

The leader suddenly looking irritated looked up towards the balcony as did Jack and the others. What they saw was not three gun men looking down at them, but a blue haired young woman standing amongst the now unconscious mercs that littered the balcony.

Jack smiled as his eyes met the woman's electric blue ones.

"Hi Jack, I'm not interrupting anything am I?" she asked with a smirk on her face.

"Not at all, how about you wait right there, while we throw out this trash?" he replied as the leader just looked at both of them, utterly confused. The blue haired woman then folded her arms and lent forward on the balcony's rail.

"Don't know, I might get bored before then? She said acting coy. Jack chuckled at her response.

"We wouldn't want that now would we?" he answered. It was funny, he hadn't seen her for years and he had thought that their first meeting would have been awkward. Yet here they were, talking like nothing had happened. He had missed that.

"What the fuck is going on here?" the confused Leader screamed regaining Jack's attention.

"Well, this is what is happening." Jack responded before punching the Batarian squarely in the face, knocking him to the ground. Now free, Tali ran to the side to get out of the fight as Jack and his friends and the mercs suddenly turned the area in to a street fight. Garrus kicked one merc in the stomach before pushing him into the

nearest wall. Wrex grabbed two mercs with both hands and slammed them into each other.

Kaiden threw punches at one merc while Jack had turned his attention to two mercs who charged at him. One swung a knife at Jack, who caught the man's attack in his hands and twisted his arm, the sudden pain causing the merc to drop the knife. Jack then kicked at the guy's kneecap, forcing him to the ground as the other man came in from behind. But the Commander spotted him and hit in the face with a back kick, sending the merc flying backwards onto the floor.

Arcee just relaxed and leant against the rail watching Jack take out one merc after the other. Sure the other guys with Jack were good fighters, the Krogan was devastating, but she liked watching Jack. He had become an excellent fighter since the last time she saw him years ago. Back then what fighting skills he knew was from watching martial art films with her back at the silo, or in the garage of his mom's home in Jasper. When June had gone to work at the hospital on a night shift, he would bring out the TV and sit and with her and watch Bruce Lee movies.

She then chuckled when Jack threw one of the mercs into the nearby wall like a rag doll. But her happy mood suddenly changed when unbeknownst to Jack, the Leader had gotten up and was charging at him with a knife.

Jack had just taken out the last merc when he saw Garrus point and shout at him.

"Jack behind you!"

Hearing this, the Commander spun around to see the Leader with the knife mere centimetres from his face. But he did not move any further and Jack looked behind the Blue Sun commander to see Arcee with her pistol, holding it at the back of the Batarian's head.

"You so much as move against my partner and I will send you to the pit you piece of scrap." she said, gritting her teeth. The leader dropped the knife and got down on his knees.

"I surrender, don't kill me, I was only doing my job." he pleaded as Jack picked up the knife and threw it away before looking at his partner with a warm smile. Her cold look softening as she looked back at him, returning the smile.

"Saved your ass again partner." she said jokingly, not moving the gun from the back of the Batarian's head.

"Hey, I had everything under control." he joked back, earning a chuckle from the femme.

Garrus and Wrex stepped in and escorted the leader away as Kaiden went over to help Tali, leaving the two partners alone. With nothing between them Jack walked over to his partner and wrapped his arms around her, embracing her. Her smile went even bigger as she returned the embrace. For the first time in years the two of them were

back together and she finally felt like herself again. She rested her head against his.

"I've missed you!" she said as she gently squeezed him a little more, as if making sure that he was real. Jack felt his heart skip a beat at the sensation of what she just did.

"I missed you too Arcee." Jack replied, unable to register what was going on around them. As far as long overdue reunions go this was much better than he had envisioned. But the moment didn't last as the two of them were brought out of it by Garrus.

"Hey, I don't mean to intrude on this happy moment, but could we like get out of here before anyone else tries to take us all out."

Both Jack and Arcee suddenly looked embarrassed as they jumped away from each other, their faces a shade redder than normal.

"Yeah good idea." Jack replied as the femme tried to look anywhere but at the Turian who was glaring at both of them.

"I have a cab waiting for me at the other side of the street" She answered finally finding her voice.

"Good" Jack replied, composing himself. "Kaiden help Tali to the Cab, Garrus and Wrex watch our prisoner."

The others nodded and walked in the direction that Arcee had pointed them in. When they were again alone, they both started walking to the same destination side by side. Jack looked over at Arcee, the warm smile of his returning.

"It's really good to see you again Arcee." he said gently. She smiled warmly back, her electric blue eyes meeting his.

"Yeah Jack, its really good to see you too."

## Kapitel 5:

The Batarian merc leader sat at table in a dark room, he had been in there for the last forty minutes and was now getting frustrated, his four eyes starting to show desperation as he frantically looked around.

"I want out, you hear me, I want out" he screamed, when suddenly the door in front of him opened filling the room with light. He closed his eyes as it almost blinded him, not noticing two figures entering the room before the door closed, blanketing the room in darkness again. The prisoner opened his eyes and looked around the room again.

"Who's there, I know someone is there, I'll tell you anything you want if you let me out."

No one answered and he felt alone.

"Well isn't that interesting..." a voice suddenly said from the corner of the room.

"...wouldn't you say Wrex?"

"Sure is, I never thought Blue Suns were so chatty." another voice said from the opposite corner behind the Batarian.

A small light activated above the table, illuminating it in front of the prisoner. Then the face of a Krogan entered the light.

"So are you gonna talk or do I have to crack you open." Wrex said with a fierce look. Garrus appeared next to him and placed a hand on his shoulder.

"I think you should listen to him, because I don't think that I could hold him back even if wanted to." Garrus then moved closer to the Batarian, right up to his face.

"And just so you know, I really don't want too." He smiled.

The Leader suddenly felt his nether regions get very wet as Wrex moved round the table, getting closer to him.

Meanwhile Jack, Arcee and Kaidan were with Tali. They were sitting at the Apollo café in the presidium commons. Tali was looking up at the projection of a blue sky with few clouds that was on the ceiling that ran the length of the Presidium ring of the Citadel. Jack and Arcee sat at one end of the table with Kaidan and Tali at the other.

"Quite a view isn't it." Jack asked as Tali finally looked back.

"It really is, I never thought I would be able to see the presidium..." she replied before her eyes started to look sad as she placed her hands on the table.



"..though Quarians have never really been welcome on the Citadel." Jack reached out and placed his hand on hers .

"As long as your with us no one will give you any trouble, I promise." Tali looked up at Jack before looking around to Kaidan and Arcee who smiled at her reassuringly. She sighed and regained her composure.

"Thank you Commander. Apart from Wrex, you and your friends are the only people to show me any kindness here."

"So can you tell us how you came to be caught up in all this?" the Commander asked. Tali looked away for a second as a cab flew past the café before looking back to the group.

"Well I was on my pilgrimage, when I began hearing reports of Geth activity outside the Perseus Veil which had to be impossible, since the Geth had never left our home system since driving my people out three hundred years ago."

"So what did you do?" Kaidan asked as the three of them listened to the young Quarian.

"Well I thought that they may have been making attempts to find our Flotilla, so I went looking for them. I managed to find a patrol on an uncharted planet and kill them."

Kaidan looked at her confused.

"Wait, but if you could fight then why didn't you help us out against the mercs earlier?"

The Quarian just looked at him, before tapping her stomach.

"I was recovering from an injury if you remember and I was running a fever due to the suit breach. And anyway you haven't seen me with a shotgun" she said acting coy.

"Anyway..." Jack said, jumping in.

"...What happened then?"

" I then removed the data core from the lead Geth and hacked its files, to see if they had discovered the Flotilla's location. But what I found was something completely different."

What did you find?" Jack then asked, his interest peaking, which made Tali shake her head and crossed her arms in return.

"Sorry, I will not reveal it here, not until we are in front of the council."

Jack nodded back with an understanding look, then leaned back and looked over at

Arcee who gently smiled back at him. He returned the smile and looked back to Tali and Kaidan.

"Well we shouldn't have to wait much longer. We gave Optimus and Anderson the heads up the moment we got back and I believe they are talking to the Council right now."

Arcee then tapped Jack's shoulder and pointed over to the right. He looked in the general direction and saw Garrus and Wrex walking towards them.

"How did it go?" Kaidan asked.

"Well there was some sweat and other bodily fluid involved that I'm trying to forget" the Turian remarked irritably. Kaidan looked at them bemused.

"Wait, did you hit him?"

"Didn't get the chance. The damn fool pissed himself before I even got to lay a finger on him, never knew the Blue suns hired such losers." Wrex answered disappointingly.

"So did you get a name of the guy who hired him?" Arcee asked entering the conversation.

Garrus grabbed a chair from an unused table and sat down next to them as Wrex walked over to the bar.

"Sure did. It was someone going by the name of Sideways, does that ring a bell with any of you?"

Arcee's eyes went wide at the mention of it. Jack noticing this placed his hand on her shoulder, not noticing that he was gently rubbing it with his thumb affectionately. This didn't go unnoticed by the femme as her spark warmed to his touch.

"You okay, you look like you saw a ghost for a second there?" he asked her. She gave him a reassuring smile as he let go and picked up drink of a tray that Wrex just brought over from the bar.

"I'm fine and yes I know that name though I never met him, it was of a Decepticon that had vanished during the war. He was a double agent, playing both sides in the conflict, so neither was very accepting of him and so he hasn't been seen or heard of for a long time since."

Jack was going to ask more about him when another C-Sec officer approached them.

"Commander Darby, I am here to inform you that the Council have requested your presence in main Chamber."

Jack acknowledged the officer and the group got up from the table and followed him to the elevator. As Arcee walked with the group she noticed Tali looking at her.

"I'm sorry but is there something wrong?" she asked trying to sound friendly. The Quarian shook her head, looking embarrassed.

"No, there's no problem. Its just that you are the first Cybertronian that I have ever met."

Arcee gave her a sympathetic look.

"I realise your people don't exactly trust us". Tali again shook her head as she offered Arcee her hand.

"Well I am not among them on this, because you helped save my life down in the under city and your friends with Commander Darby, so that counts as good in my book". She replied with a smile on her face, not that Arcee could see the smile due to Tali's enviro-suit. But the femme accepted Tali's hand and they shook before joining the others in the elevator.

## PRIME EFFECT

As Jack and the others entered the Council Chambers he saw again the four Councillors on their podium and Captain Anderson and Optimus Prime standing in the box.

"Jack" a voice called from behind the group, making them turn around to see Miko and Wheeljack joining them.

"You were called here too?" Jack asked as Miko went straight up to Arcee.

"Arcee, what are you doing here?" the Gunnery chief asked. The femme looked at the woman confused.

"Well I was in the neighbourhood and thought it was about time I visited my partner."

Miko smiled and nodded.

"Yes well it has been ages since you too were last together, ever since that.." Miko was about to finish when she was cut off when Councillor Tevos spoke.

"This meeting is now in session, Commander Darby I believe that you have acquired evidence that proves our Spectre has gone and turned against us?"

Jack stepped forward next to Optimus and Captain Anderson.

"That is right madam Councillor"

He then turned and motioned Tali to join him in the box, the two older men stepping

out to give them room.

"This is Tali'Zorah nar Raya, she came across the evidence while investigating why the Geth were spotted outside the Quarian system. Soon after she found herself on the run from Blue Sun mercenaries who had been hired to terminate her"

Then Sparatus decided to speak up.

"And we are supposed to believe the words of a suit rat, over Saren's own testimony."

Jack noticed Tali's white eyes flare up behind her visor.

"Listen here you stupid bosh'tet I wont.." Tali shouted at Sparatus as Jack stepped in to calm her down.

"Tali don't, that won't help." He said before turning his attention back to the council.

"What do you mean Saren's testimony?" he asked curiously.

Sparatus then activated his holo-tool and a giant hologram of Saren appeared in the middle of the Chamber.

"Dear Councillors I wish it was under better circumstances that I contact you but when I was informed about the ridiculous claims against myself, I decided to take matters into my own hands. You see I was nowhere near Eden Prime on the day of the attack by the Geth which of course is a terrible tragedy. But I was actually on Illium hunting down a lead on the assassin that had tried to murder my good friend Councillor Sparatus three weeks ago. I do not know where or who started this incredulous rumor, but if this Commander Jack Darby knew anything of me. Then he would come to see that it would be impossible for myself to have been a part of the events at the human colony. I serve the council and the people of our galaxy as a Spectre to my absolute fullest. I do wish to give my condolences for the lives lost on that black day at Eden Prime. My thoughts go to their loved ones and I make this pledge, that I will not stop until I find out why the Geth attacked Eden Prime and put a stop to this sudden act of aggression against our worlds. Farewell."

With that the hologram vanished as Kaidan turned to Garrus.

"What a load of bullshit right?" he whispered to the Turian who nodded in approval. Optimus and Anderson and everyone else then looked at Jack who could feel all eyes on him at that particular moment. He looked back to see Arcee giving him a warm smile of support. If he knew any better it was a look that said 'You show them who's boss!' and he smiled back to her in appreciation. Sparatus deactivated his holo-tool and looked down at Jack.

"So have you really got anything against our Spectre?" he asked in a sceptical and quite insulting tone. Jack though did not let that get to him as a confident smirk appeared on his face.

"Yes we do honoured Councillors". He then turned to Tali who activated her holo-tool and played an audio file for everyone in the chamber to hear.

"Have you located the next Lithonian Artefact" Saren spoke as the council chamber suddenly went silent as everyone was listening intently to the audio file that was now playing.

"Yes Saren, it is located on the planet of Eden Prime, but it has been excavated by the Humans and Autobots who have a colony situated there." an unknown voice replied.

"They are of no concern, alert the Geth forces we have to attack the planet, secure the artefact and await my arrival." Saren said as gasps could be heard among the audience that was watching from the balconies high up in the chamber.

"It will be done Saren." the unknown voice answered.

"Our search is nearly over Sideways, because once we have what we need from Eden Prime, we will be one step closer to the finding the Conduit" Saren continued.

"And one step closer to the return of the Reapers" Sideways finished.

Tali deactivated her holo-tool and looked around as the audience started talking amongst themselves. Jack looked at the councillors who looked shocked at the new development. Sparatus looked absolutely furious.

"How do we even know that this evidence is even legitimate. It could be a fake." he tried to reason weakly.

Valern was working his holo-tool when he stopped and looked towards the Turian councillor.

"The Quarian has just sent me a copy of the file and I have completed the scan of it. It is genuine and the voice sample is a one hundred percent match with Saren".

The whole room went silent again as the Sparatus looked down to the ground, obviously this news had hit him hard. Tevos decided to speak for her fellow councillor.

"As this new evidence has proved that Saren has in fact gone rogue and attacked the very people and principles that he was chosen to protect, we have no choice but to strip him of his Spectre status. We wish to offer our apologies to you and your people for any animosity that we had pointed at you."

"Thank you madam councillor, we were only here to make sure that the truth was known to all of you so that Saren could be stopped." Anderson replied as Tevos nodded in return.

"Since we are now one Spectre down, Commander Darby you have proven yourself worthy of becoming the first human Spectre to the Council, but unfortunately as your race is not part of the council then you do not qualify."

The balconies above started chattering again at the councillors comments. Optimus stepped forward.

"Madam Tevos and respected Councillors, I do have an answer to the problem if I am allowed to continue" the Prime said as his face remained stoic.

"And what is it Optimus Prime." Valern asked the Autobot leader.

"As the history records show, Cybertron was once a part of this council during our golden age many millennia ago and it was the duty of the Primes to defend the rights and freedoms of all sentient life in the galaxy. But when our civil war began and we found ourselves cut off from the rest of the rest of the galactic community. This Council saw fit to hand that duty to the Spectres and it seems that they too have now failed. So I believe that it is time for one to rise up and carry the title of Prime and protect this galaxy from whatever threat that Saren is planning to let loose on us all."

The Councillors spoke among themselves for a moment, going over what Optimus had suggested.

"And would that be you Optimus Prime?" Tevos asked. The Prime shook his head.

"I maybe a Prime and the leader of the Autobots, but my time has passed. Though I do know that there is a person among us today who is ready to accept this title."

Jack suddenly felt very self conscious and gulped when the Council looked at him and then his friends.

"Of whom do you speak of?" Sparatus asked, looking among the group in front of him, not looking at Jack.

Optimus turned to Jack and motioned him forward.

"Commander Jack Darby of course." he said beaming with pride, which made The Turian Councillor's jaw drop.

"But he is not even Cybertronian, how can he become a Prime?" he spat in complete disbelief as Optimus's face went stoic as he looked back at him.

"To be a Prime is to stand for and protect the values that Primus himself embodies. To lead by example and inspire those around him and forever stand vigilant against those who would seek to bring darkness over us all. Jackson Darby has proven himself worthy time and again, during the final years of our civil war and after becoming a soldier of the Alliance. He is the perfect choice to become the next Prime."

Sparatus suddenly found that his voice had deserted him after Optimus had said his piece as the other councillors nodded in agreement.

Jack meanwhile had no idea what to do and his stomach felt like it was tied up in

knots, but then suddenly he began to calm down when he felt a soft hand take his and squeeze it gently in support. He turned to find Arcee standing beside him, his hand in hers. She turned to him and smiled the kind of smile that would make Jack's heart skip a beat every time he saw it.

"Its time" she spoke gently to him as she let go of his hand and watched him walk up to Optimus, the look on her face was that of the same pride that was on Optimus's at that exact moment. Jack stood beside Optimus as the council studied him from their podium.

"Commander Darby, we accept the suggestion that Optimus Prime has offered us. But do you accept the title of Prime and the responsibilities that it brings?"

Jack looked to Optimus who was looking at him in a way that Jack could only describe as a proud father, a warm smile on his face. With the silent approval that Optimus gave him. Jack turned back to the council.

"I accept it with all that I am." he answered.

"Very well, Optimus Prime we leave this in your capable hands." Tevos said as the Council stood and watched history unfold in front of them. Optimus turned to Jack and removed a chain that was around his neck and hidden under his armour. On the chain, much like the one that Jack had with the key on it, was a small pendent shaped crystal. Optimus placed the crystal in the palm of his right hand and it glowed a gentle white energy as it grew into the now recognizable matrix of leadership.

"Jack take the key to vector sigma and place it in your right hand." Optimus told him. Jack nodded and took the key from under his t-shirt and held it in his right hand as it too grew to the size that it had been the last time he had used it years ago.

"Now hold it up against the Matrix and if proven worthy of which I have no doubt, then primus will bestow upon you the title of Prime." Optimus commanded. Jack nodded and held the key next to the fabled relic. As if on cue both relics started to glow a bright white light that encompassed both Optimus and Jack and making everyone cover theirs eyes. After several seconds the light died down and everyone looked at Optimus and Jack. Optimus had no changes to his person, but the same could not be said of Jack who first looked at the object in his hand. Gone was the key to Vector Sigma and it was replaced with a silver and gold relic that had a doughnut like shape with a white shining crystal in the hole at the center. Jack then noticed that he was no longer wearing the clothes that he had worn in the Undercity, but instead was wearing an armour that he had never seen before. It was dark grey and had a very sleek and lightweight design to it. It had a red stripe with thick silver outlines going down both of his arms from past the shoulder pads that ended at his gloved hands. And on right side of his chest plate where the Alliance insignia would be, was a Silver Autobot insignia with Red outline. He smiled at his new look before looking back up to Optimus.

"Primus has found you worthy Jackson Darby and has given you the Star of Terra, the Human matrix of leadership, inside it contains the wisdom of the Primes and is a

sibling to the matrix that I carry. You are now Jackson Prime, the first Human Prime."

And with that the chamber filled with the sounds of applause as everyone from his friends and the audience, and even the Council were applauding the new Prime as both he and Optimus watched as their matrixes shrunk back to the pendent sized crystals for them to wear on their person.

After the applause had died down. Tevos stood forward and looked at the new Prime in front of her.

"Jackson Prime, we thank you for what you have done for us this day by showing us Saren's true self and for accepting the role of this cycle's Prime. We now order....no we ask that you stop Saren from achieving his goal of finding this Conduit. We may not believe in the Reapers as a threat but Saren and the Geth force under his control must be delt with. Will you do this for the galaxy?"

Jack took a step in front of Optimus and saluted the Council.

"I will madam Councillor. I will do everything in my power to bring Saren to justice."

Tevos smiled as did Valern and Perceptor, Sparatus though gave a nod of respect to Jack.

"Then go with the knowledge that this Council grants you every resource that you will require in you mission. Good luck to you Jackson Prime."

With that the council left the chamber as Jack was left with his family and friends smiling back at him as they grouped around him.

After leaving the Council Chamber and being congratulated by each of his friends. Jack noticed Arcee checking out his new Armour.

"I have to say that armour looks really good on you Jack." she said with a playful smile.

"Thanks," he replied shyly, his face going slightly red from all the attention he was getting or maybe it was the way Arcee had just looked at him. He wasn't entirely sure which it was.

"It doesn't even feel like I am wearing it. It's not the least bit heavy." Jack added as Optimus walked up to both of them.

"I believe that armour holds more surprises for you that will reveal themselves when needed." he said with a proud smile. "I am very proud of you Jackson, but I believe that Captain Anderson would like to speak to you."

Jack turned to Anderson who looked at him with a proud look, not the first Jack has seen in the last half hour or so.

"Commander Darby or is it Jackson Prime?" he asked a little confused.



"Jackson can use both titles, it is not one or other" Optimus told Anderson which the man nodded at in understanding.

"I have another surprise for you Jack, I will be staying aboard the Citadel when the Normandy leaves. Instead you will be the ship's commanding officer from now on. After all you will need the ship more than I will." he continued as he offered Jack his hand.

The surprise in Jack's face made both Optimus and Anderson chuckle before Jack shook Anderson's hand.

"Thank you Anderson, I will take good care of her." he replied. Jack then turned to Wrex, Garrus and Tali.

"Hey guys, you know we made quite the team earlier today. Is there any chance I can convince you to join the us on the Normandy?" he asked as he was joined by Kaidan, Miko and Wheeljack, not noticing Arcee who had slipped by to speak to Optimus in private.

"Hell why not, count me in Darby" Wrex said with a smile on his face.

"Well I don't know how much help I could be, but you did save my life back in the under city so, yes I will join you and do what I can." Tali replied.

Jack then looked at Garrus, who looked like he was thinking it over.

"Well, my father always wanted me to serve in C-Sec, but I am getting tired of all the red tape and you do seem to have a knack for finding trouble Jack so yes, count me in too." The Turain replied with a smirk. Jack shook their hands and offered them a warm smile.

"Well then welcome to the Normandy. The ship is docked at bay 23 on the presidium ring. We will be leaving as soon as everyone is ready." As the three left, Optimus and Arcee joined Jack.

"Jackson, Arcee has requested a transfer from my team to your command on the Normandy" the Autobot leader said as Jack looked to Arcee.

"I am yours if you want me partner?" she said hiding any doubt she might had had at that particular moment behind a smile. Jack looked at her and gave her a big grin as he held out his hand to her.

"I would be honoured to have my partner alongside me on this mission Arcee, if you will accept the position of my XO?" he replied gaining a shocked look from the femme.

"Are you sure?" she replied hesitantly.

"You have been Optimus's SIC for a long time Arcee, you have more experience than

anyone on the Normandy, and I trust you to keep me on my toes as this is my first command."

Arcee smiled and shook Jack's hand. "Well I guess I'm your girl." she said, her face beaming.

"Yes you are Arcee." Jack replied in a gentle and warm tone that made femme's spark skip a beat.

Optimus had watched the two as they were talking and took great joy in seeing how happy they were together at this moment.

"Well it is time I was on my way. I wish you the best of luck in your mission Jackson, and Arcee take care of him."

"I will Optimus, that's a promise" the femme replied as Optimus said his goodbyes to the two of them and walked away to the transit hub. Then both partners headed for the elevator back to the Normandy.

## PRIME EFFECT

As the Normandy left the Citadel and made its way towards the space bridge, Jack and Arcee were in the cockpit as he had just introduced his new XO to Hotrod. Both command officers were now wearing Alliance uniforms.

"Sir we are getting a data packet from the Citadel. It's the council, they have sent us information on a number of coordinates where Saren might be located, based on his past actions a Spectre as well a large data file concerning the Reapers." Hotrod told Jack as he was flying the ship.

"Thanks Hotrod, now could you patch me into the intercom." Jack asked the pilot who obliged.

"Intercom open" he replied. Jack then thought for a second on what he would say before he stood straight and started to address the rest of the ship who were listening after the intercom activated.

"Crew of the Normandy, this is Commander Darby speaking. As you know I have been given command of this ship from Captain Anderson and we have been tasked with a mission of the utmost importance. We have to find Saren before he finds the Conduit. Now I won't lie to you, this will not be an easy mission. We all saw what happened at Eden Prime and we may only be one ship. But I know that this ship and her crew are the best in the Alliance and we will not fail in our mission, because this is our chance to show the galaxy what we are capable of when we all work together. We will find Saren and put an end to him and the Geth force under his control. This I promise you all." The Commander said before deactivating the intercom.

"Well said Commander and congratulations on being made a Prime. You deserve it Sir."

Jack patted Hotrod on the shoulder. "Thanks Hotrod, now take us to the first set of coordinates on the list the council sent us." Jack ordered as he and Arcee who was looking at him full of pride, turned and headed back to the CIC.

"Aye Aye Commander" Hotrod answered as the Normandy left Citadel space via the Space Bridge.

## Kapitel 6:

The Alliance frigate Normandy appeared from inside a plasma cloud and flew through another star system before jumping to hyperspace. It had been several days since the new Prime, Commander Jack Darby and his crew had started its search for Saren and so far they had come up empty. They had visited several of the coordinates given to them by the Council and yet they had found nothing. What if Saren had found yet another relic of the Lithone or had discovered the Conduit already. These thoughts and more had gone through the minds of the crew as they performed their duties aboard the ship.

Miko was keeping Wheeljack company as he worked in the ship's science bay. Tali was in Engineering. Kaidan was talking to Hotrod in the cockpit. Wrex was sitting alone in the Common room and felt quite bored. He activated his com link.

"Garrus its Wrex, you there you little Pyjak."

Garrus though was in the main battery room, running diagnostics on the ship's weapon systems.

"I can hear you Wrex, what's the problem?" Garrus replied not taking his attention from what he was doing.

"Are you gonna come up here and talk to me. The others are busy with whatever it is that they are doing, the rest of the crew wont speak to me." he said with a rather sad tone.

"I think they are intimidated by me."

Garrus then looked up from the console.

"Intimidated by a Krogan, now what would give you that impression?" Garrus replied with a chuckle.

"Yeah yeah, just get your ass up here and have a drink with me." Wrex replied with a sigh.

"Sorry, I'm still in the middle of some calibrations." the Turian replied with a sympathetic edge to his voice.

"You said that same thing two hours ago." The Krogan said bitterly as he looked down at his glass and sighed yet again as two crewmen walked in, immediately keeping their distance.

Jack was in his new quarters, well they were Anderson's quarters but as he was in command now, had the honour of a more spacious room that had everything his old quarters had and a little more. It had a bathroom and also a fish tank, Jack looked

over from his desk to the fish tank that was lit up in an azure blue light.

*'No definitely not getting any fish for that.'* he thought to himself. The last time he had attempted to look after fish, his mother ended up flushing it down the toilet when he was younger. He turned back round to his desk and reactivated his console. There were still empty boxes lying in the corner of the room next to the far end of the fish tank, left over from his attempts of making it feel more like his own. But he had to keep on looking through the reapers file that the council had sent him before they had left Citadel space.

As he looked through the file, he could see why the Council liked to believe the Reapers were nothing more than a myth. This whole file read like one of those dark fairy tales his mother read him when he was a little kid, like Hansel and Gretel. The old witch in that one had scared him so much that he had to sleep in his mother's bed that particular night. His thoughts drifted to his mother as he recalled the conversation they had a few days ago over the stellar com.

She was extremely proud of him for becoming a Prime and had faith in him to complete this secret mission that she could not know about. She had also told him not to worry about her as her husband, Jack's step father William Fowler had just bought them a new house on the coast of California and they had just moved in a few days ago. Jack had never really liked Fowler when they had first met, but they soon earned each others respect as they took part in the Autobots war.

They had even grown to be friends by the end and Jack had also noticed how Folwer and his Mother had grown close. He was happy that his mother had found someone who actually cared about her compared to the other guys that had come and gone in her life. So when Folwer asked June to marry him, he first asked for Jack's consent and he gave it happily.

As Jack sat in silence he was suddenly brought out from his thoughts by a sound going off which meant that someone was waiting outside his room.

"Come in" he answered as the door opened and Arcee walked in, her electric blue eyes scanning the room before falling on Jack as he sat at his desk. A gentle smile grew on her face.

"Hey Jack, I'm not bothering you I am?" she asked as Jack returned the smile.

"No not at all, actually I could use the company. This file on the Reapers is starting to give me a headache with how little it actually says on them." He replied while gently rubbing his eyes.

Arcee walked beside him and bent down placing one hand on the desk and the other on the back of his chair as she looked at the data on his screen. At this close Jack could smell the natural fragrance of her soft skin and it sent waves over him as he suddenly felt very hot. He took a deep breath before looking back at the screen. If Arcee had noticed this, she didn't show it as she continued to look at the data, but Jack couldn't see a small smile that had graced her lips.

"Maybe you could use a fresh pair of eyes on this?" she said in a gentle tone.

"That's a good idea." he replied as Arcee rose back up and walked over to get a chair. She then noticed the door to her left. Her curiosity got the better of her as the femme walked over to it and opened the door revealing a small bathroom with toilet, a sink and a fully functioning shower.

She turned to Jack with a look of surprise on her face.

"You have a shower?..." she asked making Jack turn to her.

"...My quarters don't have one?"

Jack gave her a playful look as he looked at the femme.

"Well I am the commanding officer, all the privileges and such "

She crossed her arms and tried to look as annoyed as she could though she found it hard to do with the way Jack was looking back at her.

"But you can use my shower if you like?" he said which caught her by surprise.

"Really Jack?" she asked.

"Sure, we are partners after all." he said as he got up and went over to the drawer and picked out a large towel which he then handed to her. Arcee took the towel.

"Thank you Jack" she smiled to him as she then turned and headed to the bathroom.

"It does only have cold water though" The Prime joked which the femme didn't find funny.

"You better be joking because if not, then I will hunt you down...partner" she playfully replied as Jack chuckled.

Arcee then entered the bathroom only to come back out a moment later.

"There is not enough room to change in there" she observed. Jack then pointed behind him to the area on the other side of his bed.

"Then get changed behind me, I promise I won't look" Jack said with a smirk gracing his face. His XO looked back at him with a look of disbelief.

"Yeah sure, because you are not like other males of your species are you." she replied dryly.

"I am a Prime after all and we Primes do not lie remember" he said in kind. Arcee then motioned him to turn back to the screen, Jack faking hurt feelings as he gave her a

sad smile and then carried on reading the data on the Reapers.

After a moment, making sure that Jack was true to his word, Arcee then started to undress. As he kept his eyes on the screen, not wanting to upset his partner. Jack found himself actually wanting to take a peek, but kept himself from doing so out of respect for her. When she walked back towards the bathroom she was wearing only the towel that Jack had handed her.

*'Damn, Arcee looks great no matter what she is wearing.'* he thought as he found himself ever so slightly glancing back.

"I wont be long Jack" she said as she closed the door behind her. Jack then looked back at his screen only for his attention to be caught by the sound of the shower activating. He just sighed and slumped into his chair, numerous thoughts going through his mind.

Arcee removed the towel and hung it up on the wall as she walked under the shower, the warm water spraying over her. It was so soothing on her skin that she let herself completely relax. But it was at that moment that her thoughts dwelled on the man in the next room, her Jack. And she found that thinking of him warmed her spark more than the shower she was in.

After a few minutes, Arcee stepped back out with the towel wrapped around her, and her blue hair all messy from drying it with that same towel. Jack turned away again, this time without her needing to mention it. Which made her smile as Arcee got dressed, she actually thought it was quite cute that Jack had obeyed her.

"So did you enjoy the shower?" Jack ask as Arcee stepped back round to him fully dressed and her hair styled back to the way that she always had it and personally Jack loved the way she looked.

"Yes I will have to use it again" she replied.

"You hungry, I was just thinking of getting a bite to eat if your interested in joining me?" the Femme then asked. Jack smiled at her and turned off his console.

"Sure, feeling a little peckish myself actually, lets go see what chef has on the menu today." he replied as the both headed out of his room.

They had only got to the elevator when suddenly the intercom activated and Hotrod's voice spoke.

"Senior Officers report to the CIC, I repeat....." Jack and Arcee looked at each other for a moment and they could both see the disappointment in each others eyes as they entered the elevator.

Once in the CIC, they both walked up to the cockpit and stood next to their pilot.

"Report Hotrod, what is it?" Jack asked.

Hotrod looked up from his console at both of them.

"Commander we are picking up a strange signal coming from the star system next to one we are in. I only detected it because I recalibrated the sensors to a more sensitive calibration, so that we don't miss a thing when we entered the last system on our list."

Jack smiled at his pilot and placed his hand on his shoulder in support.

"Good work Hotrod, I think this is worth checking out"

Arcee looked at the Commander questioningly.

"Jack why do you think that?"

Jack looked over to her.

"Just seems strange to pick up a signal when we are about to reach the final set of coordinates. We might have missed it if Hotrod hadn't altered the sensors."

Jack then turned back to the Autobot pilot.

"Hotrod set course for the location of that signal and engage the hyper drive."

"Aye Aye Commander" Hotrod replied.

## PRIME EFFECT

The Normandy entered the system and flew towards a large brown/red planet with a ring of asteroids around it. Both partners were still in the cockpit with Hotrod.

"Sir the signal is coming from a star ship that is inside the planet's asteroid field. I can't get any more details from this far out."

"Then take us in closer Hotrod." Jack said. The pilot nodded and flew the ship towards the outskirts of the field and slowed the ship to a stop.

"Cant afford to get any closer with the random way that those Asteroids are moving in there. But I am getting a more clearer scan. I am also picking up an Alliance IFF code." Hotrod said while bringing up the details of the ship on his screen. The Prime and the femme looked over the details.

"Alliance cruiser Conestoga, what is it doing all the way out here in the Terminus systems..." Jack asked.

"...How is the ship looking?"



"Sensor readings show that it has taken a bit of a beating from the asteroids but it still has about 57% hull integrity and breathable atmosphere aboard." Hotrod reported.

"What about life signs?" the Commander asked.

Hotrod shook his head in frustration. "Funny thing is whatever that signal the ship is emitting, it is blocking our sensors from detecting any life signs. But the same signal doesn't effect our sensors when it comes to anything else."

Jack mulled over what their next move would be and then activated the intercom.

"This is the Commander, Garrus, Wheeljack and Tali, I want you to meet Arcee and myself in the shuttle bay in full combat gear. And Colonel Kage, I want you and a team of marines down there ready too." Jack said before gesturing to Arcee to follow him.

"Hotrod, the ship is yours until we return" he added, earning a nod from the pilot.

"Aye Aye Commander." Hotrod replied as the partners left the CIC.

Down in the Shuttle bay, Garrus, Wheeljack and Tali were waiting next to shuttle one in full armour. Wheeljack's was his usual Black and white design, while Garrus was wearing a blue and silver armour. Tali was still wearing her enviro-suit while adjusting the shotgun in her hands. Next to shuttle two was a group of marines in standard alliance battle gear. Among them was a Caucasian man in his mid forties who looked like he had seen many battles in his life.

"I cant believe that I have to take orders from that boy." he said in a gruff voice tinged with frustration.

One of the marines turned round to him, surprise on his face.

"But he is the first Human Prime sir, as well as a Commander. Surely that is enough to warrant respect Colonel?" the private asked hoping not to offend him.

He looked at the private and gritted his teeth.

"Son I have spent twenty five years in the military, I have fought in some of the most dangerous conflicts on our planet. But this boy, this Jack Darby has risen through the ranks with ease, probably due to his friendship with the Autobots. I don't trust anyone who has had an easy ride, especially in our field of expertise."

One of the Marines then pointed out to the Colonel that Jack had just entered the Shuttle bay. Kage looked around to see the commander in his Prime armour and walking next to him was the Autobot femme Arcee, who was wearing a blue and black armour with pink highlights on her arms and legs. Jack stood between the two groups with his XO to his left side.

"Okay everyone, the mission is simple, we are going over in two shuttles. Arcee, myself, Garrus, Tali and Wheeljack will be in shuttle one and will board the Conestoga

via the bow shuttle bay. Colonel Kage, you and your team will take shuttle two and board via the aft cargo bay. Once onboard, we will search the ship and meet in the CIC at its center. Our objectives are to access the data core and find out what happened on the ship, see if the crew are still alive and assist them if possible. Any questions?"

Everyone remained quiet as Jack looked at each of them, noticing Kage's not so pleasant look, Jack walked up to him.

"Is there a problem Colonel?" The Prime asked his face remaining stoic. The colonel just stared at Jack. If this was Kage's attempt to make the Prime feel small, then he really didn't know Jack at all. "Is there something on my face Colonel?" he asked, his face remaining stoic. The two just stared at each other like statues. Neither man wanted to break first, as the room had gone so quiet that if you listened you could hear crewmen talking on the deck above. Everyone just looked at the two leaders. A slight smile appearing Arcee's face.'

That's my Jack' she thought as Kage finally broke the silence.

"No Commander"

He didn't look happy that he had just yielded to Darby, the man he didn't believe deserved to be where he was.

"If there is nothing else.....sir" he replied in a annoyed tone.

"Carry on Colonel" Jack replied as he turned, ignoring the fact that the Kage was staring daggers into his back as he joined his team in shuttle one.

The two shuttles left the Normandy and flew into the asteroid field, dodging the huge chunks of rock that were double, some times triple the size of them. Onboard shuttle one, Jack was sitting down with Arcee to his left and Garrus to his right.

"Jack, I know you may not want to hear this, but I think Kage is going to be more trouble than he is worth." the Turian said looking at Jack with a troubled expression.

"He will do his duty, he wears the uniform." The Prime replied, causing Arcee to give her two cents.

"I don't think it is that simple Jack..." she said while placing a hand on his in support. Jack smiled back in appreciation.

"...he doesn't respect you and I can see that. Just don't turn your back on him." she said as she looked into his eyes. Jack could see the worry in her electric blue eyes.

"Okay Arcee" he then looked over to the Turian.

"Garrus thanks, both of you. I will make sure not to turn my back on him." He then looked across to Wheeljack and Tali who also smiled at him in support.

"Commander we are coming up on the Conestoga." the pilot reported as Jack went over to the cockpit and looked out at the damaged ship that they were heading towards.

"Okay, land us in the in the shuttle bay at the ship's bow." Jack said before rejoining his team.

The two shuttles then split up, shuttle two went round to the aft of the large star ship as jack's shuttle flew round to the bow and into the open shuttle bay and landed.

"Sir I have established a connection to the Conestoga's systems and erected a force field and established a breathable atmosphere in the bay." the pilot said. Jack acknowledged him and opened the hatch, him and his team disembarking, weapons at the ready.

"Colonel team one is aboard, report your status." Jack said over his com link. After a few seconds Kage's voice came through.

"Team two is aboard and has begun searching the ship. No sign of the crew yet."

"Roger that, we are heading towards the CIC now." Jack then closed the com as Tali activated her holo- tool and brought up a map of the ship.

"We should be able to reach the CIC via the these corridors" Tali pointed out to the group as they left the shuttle bay and promptly headed into the rest of the ship. As they walked the corridors the team found that they were almost completely dark apart from one or two lights flicking on and off every now and then.

"Well this is a good sign" Garrus said as they activated their torches and illuminated the area around them as they started down one of the corridors. Following the map that Tali had, they walked through the empty hallways but not come across one single crew member.

"Is anyone else getting a bad feeling from all of this." Wheeljack said as Arcee and their Prime took the lead.

"It certainly doesn't bode well for the crew does it." Arcee replied.

"Tali, are you getting any life readings at all." the femme asked the Quarian who just shook her head.

"No, I have added my scanner to the map, but that signal is still messing with them."

Jack turned to face Tali. "Any idea where that signal is coming from?"

"No, I can't pin it down, its like the whole ship is emitting it." she answered, the confusion in her voice evident. Jack was about to say something else when Arcee froze on the spot, her weapon's torch illuminating a body lying on the ground in front of them.

"Jack, I have found something" she said with a unnerved tone. The Commander and Wheeljack walked up to investigate while Garrus watched the rear. The two kneeled down next to the body as the Autobot started scanning the body with his holo-tool. Jack looked down at it. It looked like it had been attacked by a wild animal. The flesh had been torn from the bones and the face was missing, most likely ripped off. If Arcee had been human, she would have thrown up by now. She had seen some sights during the war, but nothing like this. Jack looked at Wheeljack.

"What have you got?"

The bot looked up from his holo -tool.

"Well he's dead Jack" he said in a matter of fact tone. Jack looked at him with deadpan expression.

"No shit, can you tell us anything else?"

"Well that whatever killed him was strong and fast, going over the marks left by the flesh being torn from the body."

Both then got up and stood over the corpse and looked back at the others. Jack saw the worry that had appeared on his team mates faces.

"This doesn't change our mission, we still have to find out what this ship was doing out here and we can only find that out at the CIC." He then activated his com link.

"Colonel Kage, we have found one of the crew dead. Have you found anything on your end."

Nothing came over the com but static.

"Colonel come in" Jack said again but still nothing.

"Now that can't be good." Garrus said as he kept watch.

"Maybe the signal is interrupting our com link." Jack replied before he turned to Tali.

"How far are we from the CIC?" he asked as the Quarian looked at the map.

"We are not far now, just a little bit further."

Jack nodded and looked at the rest of the group.

"Okay, we're moving on, but be on your guard. Whatever killed that man is probably still here. Lets go."

The team then moved further through the ship, keeping a watchful eye on everything they saw as they tried to stay silent, so not to alert whatever could be hiding in the

shadows.

When they got to the CIC, they found it the same as the rest of the ship they had gone through, empty. Wheeljack and Tali started working on the ships computers, trying to bring up whatever information they could find. Garrus kept an eye on the door they had just entered by while Arcee guarded the other, looking out into the dark corridor ahead. Jack walked over to the galaxy map that was still functioning and activated the captain's terminal. He saw the last two reports that the ship's commanding officer had recorded and played the second to last entry, keeping the volume just loud enough for the team to hear.

*"Captain's star log, 13th March 2028. We have now been in this system for the past three days, while attempting to repair our engines that had been going faulty ever since we found that artefact on the planet Virmire days before. I do not know why that Spectre had ordered us to that system but I am certain that the artefact is to blame. Since we excavated it, several of my crew have complained of headaches and others have reported seeing things that are not there. Even as I record this log, I too have seen parts of the bulkheads seemingly move when in fact they did not. What is happening to us?"*

Everyone looked toward Jack.

"So this ship has been here for over a year and yet no one even noticed that it had gone missing?" Wheeljack said as he and Tali continued to work.

"And he mentioned a Spectre and an Artefact, it has to be Saren. I guess he sent this ship out here and then deleted any record of its mission." Arcee replied while looking down the dark corridor.

"And what about condition of the crew, the headaches and hallucinations they were experiencing, could the artefact be responsible. Does that mean we are in danger of falling to its effects." Tali said looking at Jack.

"I don't know Tali, but it sounded like they had been exposed to it for several days, so for the moment we should be alright. Now I will just play the last report." Jack said as he activated the terminal.

*"Captain's Star log, the date.... what was it again, It doesn't matter. I was wrong, we were all wrong. They are here to save us all, to make us one with them. Help us ascend. All we need to do is listen to their song. When I close my eyes I can see them in my mind, black shadows infesting my thoughts. I was afraid of them to start with, but not any longer. I will give my life for Sovereign...."* the captain said before the sound of something metal piercing his skin filled the room and then he was heard coughing up blood before everything went silent and the recording ended.

The whole room was quiet, as everything they had just heard sank in. Jack then turned off the terminal and walked over to Tali and Wheeljack.

"Oh keelah" Tali said as the Commander put a hand on her shoulder to reassure her.

"Have you found anything?" he asked and Wheeljack nodded.

"Yes, Saren was the Spectre in charge, he used his position to have this ship go out to the planet Virmire without giving them any additional information. Also the artifact they found wasn't Lithonian, but of unknown origin and is currently in the Science lab. I can't get anything else of any use since the rest of the database is heavily fragmented."

"Is it possible that the artifact is of Reaper origin?" Arcee asked while looking back at them.

"It is possible, and I think it is worth a look." Jack replied as he placed his hand to his ear and activated his com link.

"Commander Darby to Colonel Kage, please come in" he said, but still nothing. Jack was about to turn it off when sound of gunfire came over the com. He then heard voices shouting, including Kage's.

"Kage come, in what's your status?" Jack asked again.

"Kage here, we are under attack by multiple enemies and have been forced to take cover in a storage room on deck 12. We have lost two of our team and could use some assistance."

Jack motioned the others in the direction of Kage's team.

"We are on our way, hang on Kage" Jack said before turning off the com and looking at his team.

"Okay, we now have a better idea of what happened here, but team two needs our help. So our new objectives are to help Kage and his team, then find this Artefact and find a way to shut down its signal so that we can communicate with shuttles, ok?"

Everyone nodded even though Jack could see that they were shaken a little by what they had just found and heard in the last few minutes. "Alright then, let's move out" he said as they left the CIC and headed in the direction that Kage's team were in.

They hadn't gotten far when a high pitch scream echoed down the corridor in front of them. They raised their weapons and illuminated the area in front of them with their torches.

"What the hell was that" Arcee asked as Jack took a step in front of her.

"I guess we are about to find out what has killed this crew and who are currently attacking our other team." Garrus said as another scream echoed behind him making him turn in its direction.

"Okay we are surrounded then, everyone take defensive positions." Jack ordered as he and Arcee kept a vigilant view on the corridor ahead of them, it was blanketed in

darkness between flickers of the lights on the ceiling. Garrus, Wheeljack and Tali watched the area behind them. For a long moment all they heard was inhuman screaming getting closer from both directions. Then suddenly a horde of creatures ran out of the shadows towards the group. They appeared to be human but their eyes were devoid of life, glowing a hollow blue light as they screamed at the team.

"Fire at will" Jack shouted as they opened fire, taking down several of the creatures that were running at them, but more still came. Bullets riddling through the creatures, spilling blood all over the walls, but still they kept coming.

"They gonna be on top of us in moments Prime" Wheeljack shouted back as he and Garrus took down several more while Tali blew two others away with her shotgun.

"Take that you bosh'tet" she cried out while Jack and Arcee remained quiet and just focused on head shots, putting down a number of the enemies.

"Go for head shots and conserve ammo" Jack commanded as he took down three more that had nearly got within arms reach of them.

"Start moving forward and keep this formation" he said as the group started moving while keeping the creatures at bay with their weapons fire.

"These things just don't know when to quit." Wheeljack commented as one enemy got too close, causing him to equip his sword and slice it in half, blood splattering on the wall next to him.

"Well at least they not very smart" Garrus observed as he and Tali switched positions so that she could cover him while he reloaded his weapon.

"Yeah but if we let our guard down even for a second they will overwhelm us" Arcee replied as she blew open the head of one, causing its insides to hit the face of another creature that screamed at her. Arcee then pointed her weapon at that one and fired taking its right eye out the back of its head as it then fell limp on the floor. Others running over the body as they continued to attack.

Jack then got a signal from Kage and answered it as he killed a few more creatures.

"Kage, what is your situation?" he asked as he heard gunfire and inhuman screams over the com link.

"We are holding our own right now, but they just keep coming. How close are you?" he shouted over the weapon's fire.

"We are near, but have come under attack too" Jack replied as he reloaded his gun and Arcee covered him.

"We will join you in a few minutes" he said as he lifted the gun up and blew the legs from under one creature before putting a bullet between its eyes.

"Roger that" Kage replied before deactivating the com link.

## PRIME EFFECT

They slowly made their way through the hallways while under continuous attack from the monsters. But things were starting to get desperate as they soon realised that if these things continued to attack like this they would run out of ammo before they could reach Kage and his team.

"So any ideas" Garrus asked as he took down two more with one bullet passing through both their heads.

"Nice shot" Tali said gaining a smile from the Turian. Jack took a quick scan of the corridor ahead while continuing to fire on the hordes approaching them. He then saw what looked like a gas cylinder which was on a the wall right down the bottom where the creatures were running from.

"Do you see a gas cylinder down your end of the corridor." Jack asked.

"Yeah" Garrus mentioned after spotting it.

"Shoot it" the Prime replied. Garrus looked back after killing two that had gotten close.

"That's your plan?"

"Yeah" Jack said with a grin growing on his face.

"Okay then, fire in the hole" he shouted as both of them shot their respective cylinders which exploded into a fireball at either end of the corridor, enveloping the horde close by and taking out the ones closing on the group. The team dived onto the floor as the fire passed over them before disappearing.

After the ringing in their ears had died down. They all got up to find charred remains lying around them and no more creatures attacking. Wheeljack looked at the bodies and smiled.

"Why didn't I think of that?" he said happily. Garrus turned to him.

"Well if you had you may have brought some grenades with you." he responded with sarcasm in his voice.

"Well I didn't know we would be fighting zombies on this mission." Wheeljack answered back.

Tali looked over at one of the bodies.



"It's not a...what did you call it. A zombie?" she remarked as she took scans with her holo-tool.

"They were human though but it seems that they have been heavily modified by tech. And that tech has the same energy signature as the signal covering this ship." she added as the others stood around her as Arcee and Jack looked at each other.

"Are you okay?" Jack asked not trying to hide the concern in his voice.

"I'm fine, just running low on ammo" Arcee replied while giving Jack a gentle smile. Jack then turned back to Tali and the others.

"Well we can figure out what these things are once we are together with Kage's team, lets keep moving."

They were about to head on when suddenly the vent covering behind Arcee smashed open and a creature grabbed her and pulled her into the vent.

"JACK HELP!" she screamed as it hauled her off. Jack suddenly felt any self control he had disappear as his mind was overcome by the need to help his partner, his girl.

"ARCEE!" he yelled back as he jumped into the vent, falling down into the darkness below. While leaving his three friends alone with the sounds of more creatures screaming as they approached them again.

## Kapitel 7:

Gunfire and monstrous screams could be heard echoing down the corridors of the Conestoga as three people ran from a large horde of creatures intent on ripping them apart. They had just been separated from their friends, one had been torn away from them and into the darkness, the other went charging after her. None of them knew what had become of the two, but as of this moment they had more pressing matters like trying to stay alive.

"We got to keep moving, stay ahead of them." Garrus shouted back to the others as they kept firing back at the creatures running after them.

"I'm running low on ammo over here." Tali said while Wheeljack threw her an ammo pack.

The group ran round a corner to find that they had come up to a door that would not open when Tali hit the activation panel.

"Oh now that's great." the Turian said as Wheeljack fired off another few bursts from his weapon into the crowd that was closing behind them, causing the creatures to topple over their dead buying the group several more seconds.

"Can you get that door open Tali?" Garrus asked while firing around the corner with the Autobot. The Quarian activated her holo-tool and tried to interface with door's controls. She shook her head in frustration and cursed.

"Its no good, I can't open it."

Garrus looked over at Wheeljack.

"Do you think you can?"

The Autobot shrugged and patted Tali on the shoulder.

"Let me try?" he said to her calmly as she got up and joined Garrus in keeping the horde back.

"Wait a minute, I have an idea." the Quarian said as she then worked on her holo-tool. Garrus shot down two more creatures, but the rest were closing in.

"Either of you can come up with something any time now."

Suddenly a yellow holographic ball appeared in front of Tali.

"Watch this" she said happily as the ball flew round the corner and headed towards the horde who went straight for it, clawing away at it. Tali looked to Garrus.

"You may want to get back here" she suggested as the Turian looked back to the ball and the growing horde surrounding it.

"Right" he said as he took cover moments before the ball exploded, taking out the creatures.

"That was a drone right?" Garrus asked as Tali deactivated her holo-tool smiling back.

"Yes, I just programmed it to explode when it was too damaged to operate."

Wheeljack meanwhile hacked through the doors controls.

"I got it." he exclaimed as the others turned to see the doors open, all their attention on what was inside.

Jack opened his eyes to find himself lying on his front on a cold metallic floor. He slowly got up, every part of him aching. He looked around and found himself in a hallway that looked somewhat different to the ones that he and his team had explored earlier. Just how far had he fallen after he had jumped into the vent after Arcee he thought.

'Arcee' his mind became full with images of her as guilt suddenly came over him. He should have been watching more closely, then she wouldn't have been snatched like that.

'*She could be...*' he started to think before shaking his head.

'*Cant think like that, she is alive. My girl is a survivor.*' he thought as he looked up to see the vent opening above him.

'*So where did it take you.*' He thought while looking down at the ground and noticing marks that could only have been made from something or someone being dragged. He then heard a familiar inhuman scream echoing from wherever the dragging marks were leading. Now with a direction to head in, he picked up his weapon and headed down the corridor in the hope of finding his partner.

Garrus, Wheeljack and Tali all looked dumbstruck at what they saw behind the door they had just opened.

"Well you just gonna stand there, or are you gonna get in here before more of those things show up."

The three of them nodded and ran through the door to then be approached by Colonel Kage, looking worse for wear, but still alive.

"Private get that door closed quickly now" he said to the young man to his side who ran over to the door and started working on it, as another marine stood watch with his weapon ready in case any more creatures showed up.

"So is this all there is, where's Darby?" Kage asked. The three of them looked down at the ground as if ashamed.

"When we were attacked, one of the creatures grabbed Arcee and hauled her into a ventilation shaft. The Commander went in after her without a second thought." Garrus reported. The Colonel just looked at him in amazement.

"You telling me he deserted his team for just one of you. Why the hell did he do that." he screamed at them, making Wheeljack's eyes narrow as the Autobot found his voice and glared at the man.

"He did it because he cares about her" he answered, the anger in his voice growing. The Colonel acted oblivious to the wrecker's attitude and continued his tirade.

"I don't care if she is the love of his life, a commanding officer is not supposed to leave his team just to save one life. No matter how close they are."

At this point the three of them all started getting angry at the Colonel. True this guy was an asshole that was for sure, but now he was just going over the top with his attitude towards their Commander.

"Well sir, it just so happens that she is the love of his life, it's just neither of them has actually realised it fully. And also the Commander happens to be a good friend of mine so I would suggest you keep your mouth shut the next time you want to insult him or I will show you what we Wreckers do best." the Autobot said, not even trying to hide the anger that was growing inside of him as he stood right in the Colonel's face. But before anything could happen the two marines who had just closed the door, appeared with their guns aimed at the three. The Colonel looked right in the face of Wheeljack, not the least bit impressed with the wrecker.

"I would suggest you back down, since with both Darby and Arcee MIA, that makes me the next one in charge. And unless you want to be thrown in the brig when we get back, you better back down."

Wheeljack took his hands off the hilts of his swords on his back and stood back, but never taking his eyes off the Colonel as Kage smiled back at him, revelling in his victory.

The Autobot stood back with Garrus and Tali as the two marines joined the Colonel who placed his hands behind his back.

"Now since I am now in charge, I believe that the mission should be scrubbed and we should head back to the ship before we lose anyone else."

"We cant, the Commander and Arcee are still out there and they need our help" Garrus interrupted, earning a glare from Kage.

"Yes, also the Commander's orders were clear, we have to get to the artefact and disable it so that our com links and map will function properly." Tali added. Wheeljack

cocked his head and gave the Colonel an I told you so look.

"I guess you didn't think of that did you?"

Kage could feel his anger at these three coming to an head, but he held it back and sighed.

"You make a good point, so we will head for the artefact and we will search for the two of them along that path, as long as you know where to look for this thing?" he asked looking at Tali.

"I have an idea about that, you see the signal looks like it is coming from the whole ship but there is a build up of energy coming from a few decks below us, here." she pointed on her holo-tool map which was still a little faulty.

"Okay, you may want to pick up some ammo packs that we have found. You will need them. Move out" the Colonel ordered as the group headed out of the room through another door and back into the ship's dark corridors.

## PRIME EFFECT

Jack slowly followed the tracks that the creature had left, hoping not to gain any attention from the creatures that might have been in the shadows with him. He then turned a corner to find a shocking sight. The corridor had opened up into a large room filled with metal spikes that had the same creatures that had been attacking his team impaled on them. He activated his holo-tool and took some quick scans as he moved between the spikes, trying not get too close. Once he got half way through the room, he saw one creature kneeling over a body that when Jack got close enough could see was Arcee unconscious. Jack knew he had to take the creature out quietly or he would find himself overwhelmed within seconds. So he took a deep breath and placed his weapon on his back to free his hands and took one step after another as he moved up behind the creature until he was right behind it. He then grabbed the creature's head and with enough force he snapped it's neck and placed the now limp body on the floor before going to his partner's side.

"Arcee...,Arcee, come on partner wake up..." he said as he tried to wake her.

"...You really don't want to be sleeping in here".

Arcee then started to stir as she opened her eyes to see Jack looking down at her, a warm smile growing on his face.

"Jack...Jack you came for me?" she asked as he helped her to a sitting position.

"Of course I did, I wasn't going to leave my girl down here."

The femme looked at Jack in a curious way after hearing his comment.

*'Damn it Jack, great time to say what you were thinking out loud.'* he mentally kicked himself, before noticing a smile appear on her face.

"I'm your girl I am?" she asked, trying to gain a reaction from the Prime who's cheeks had gone a brighter shade of red.

"Of course you're my girl, we're partners remember. Now I think we should get out of here, can you move?" he asked as Arcee got up and looked for her weapons.

"I think you dropped these" Jack handed her SMG's to her.

"We should be careful since neither of us has much ammo left, so I think that stealth would be the best option."

She nodded and looked around to see the spikes and their captives.

"What the scrap, was I going to end up on one those things?" she asked, fear slightly in her voice .

"I don't know but I did take some scans that we can go over once we are out of here. Lets go." he said as both of them started towards the end of the room and back into the familiar looking corridors. As Jack took the lead with Arcee watching their rear, it suddenly became clear to Jack that they were lost and that they were surrounded by possibly a hundred or so of those creatures. Jack's mood didn't go unnoticed by Arcee either who placed a reassuring hand on his shoulder.

"You okay there?" she asked in a soft tone. Jack turned to look at her when he then noticed another creature right behind her ready to pounce.

"Look out!" he screamed as he instinctively pushed her out of harms way and jammed his weapon into the creature's mouth and pulled the trigger, decorating the wall with its brain. He then turned back to the femme who again looked at him in appreciation.

"Thanks for the save." she said taking a breath before both of them suddenly heard the inhuman screams echoing around them and getting closer.

"Don't thank me yet" Jack replied as they both saw another horde of creatures appear just from where they came from and started running after them.

"RUN?" Jack shouted as he opened fire on the group and Arcee ran ahead of him before he too turned and ran. Both gave it everything they had to stay ahead of the stampede that was following them , but the creatures were gaining. Arcee then noticed an open door not far in front.

"This way" she called back to Jack as she ran through the door and activated its controls as Jack stepped through and turned around firing a final burst of bullets at the creatures as they neared. Arcee then pressed one button and the doors slide shut with a clang of metal. Jack then noticed the hard lock lever and pulled it down making

a heavy metal sound.

"That should keep them out" Jack said as Arcee looked around, noticing that the room only had one exit.

"Yeah but we are trapped." She said in an almost fearful tone as she looked over to Jack and noticed something on his face. She got closer and saw a trickle of blood on his forehead.

"Your hurt" she pointed out to him. Which made him put his hand to his forehead and then view it, seeing the blood on his fingers.

"Yeah, I must cut my head in the vent when I jumped in after you." he theorized as she directed him to sit down against the wall so she could treat his wound. He didn't want to, but she forced the issue by placing her hands on his arms and physically directing him to sit. He sighed in defeat as he sat down, she bent down in front of him and picked out some medi-gel from her pouch and sprayed it on the cut, causing Jack to hiss in pain.

"Don't be a baby" she chuckled as he looked into her electric blue eyes.

"Thanks." he said as she cleaned his wound.

"Don't mention it.." she replied with a smile.

"...thanks for rescuing me back there".

Then for a moment there was a comfortable silence between the two of them as they just looked at each other. Then a loud bang against the doors shattered the moment, causing them both to look in its direction. Then another bang, and another.

"Sounds like they are trying to get in..." Arcee said as she picked up her guns and checked their ammo, which made her curse under her breath.

"...I only have a few bullets left"

Jack lifted his avenger rifle up and pointed at the zero counter on it.

"You still have more than I do".

The banging at the door continued at a steady pace, as what must have been scores of the creatures were at the other side trying to get in.

"How long do you think those doors will last?" Arcee asked, trying not to sound too worried.

"The doors looked quite strong, but depending how many of those things are on the other side, I would say not long." he replied. Arcee then turned to see a look on Jack's face that was too familiar. It was the same look that he had that night years ago.

"Jack what's wrong?" she asked. Jack looked at her then back to the door.

*'I cant believe that this is going to be it, that we are trapped with our backs to the wall while god knows how many of those things are just waiting to break in here and slaughter us.'* he thought to himself as a soft finger then touched his chin and brought his eyes to the femme looking back at him, her electric blue eyes questioning. Arcee could see that something was burdening her partner like a heavy weight on his shoulders.

"Jack tell me what's wrong, talk to me". She asked in a calm but almost pleading tone never taking her eyes off the Prime. Jack looked at her before sighing and looking down at the floor in defeat.

"Arcee I am sorry." he replied, his voice soft and nervous.

"Sorry for what?"

Jack looked like he was about to open up when he suddenly looked away.

"Nothing forget it." he closed off. Arcee suddenly felt anger build up in her spark.

"No, you cant do that. Your not pushing me away again." she said as she got up into a kneeling position in front of Jack and stared at him, her eyes now looked determined. The Commander looked back at her, looking like he just wanted to be swallowed up by the ground so long as he didn't have to continue this conversation.

"Why what good will it do now?"

"Jack you have been holding back from me ever since we have been back together, you don't want to admit it, but I have seen it whenever we get too close, you suddenly look guilty, even if it is just for a moment..." she replied her voice almost breaking with emotion.

"...If this is going to be our final moments, I don't want there to be anything between us, I care about you too much."

As Jack looked back into her eyes, feeling like his soul would get lost in them if he stared into them for too long, he was suddenly bombarded with memories of that night years ago.

*'The war had ended only a few weeks ago, Megatron was dead and the Decepticons had surrendered. But due to the their energon supply having run out because of the conflict, the cybertronians had decided that the only way to survive as a species was to transfer their sparks to the con's pretender protoforms. In essence they would become human if only in appearance.'*

*Team Prime had been the first to volunteer for the procedure, making sure that it was safe enough for the rest of the transformers. Jack was standing in the science lab at the*



*Silo. He stood by and watched nervously as his partner Arcee was lying on a berth, next to her was a small almost featureless body of a Pretender lying on a similar berth with a sheet covering it from its chest to its feet and connected to the femme via a large transparent cable that had been plugged directly into her spark chamber.*

*Jack had never felt so nervous in his life, sure the process had worked for Bumblebee, Ratchet and Optimus who were watching with him. But this was his partner who was going through the procedure now and he was silently praying for it to work, hoping that nothing would go wrong. Knockout and Wheeljack worked the controls of the machine that was hooked up to the femme and her new body in waiting as Jack walked up to Arcee and placed his hand in hers, which made her look down at him with a smile.*

*"Don't worry Jack, I'll be back before you know it." she said to him in a confident tone. Jack's face lightened up a little.*

*"It better, because I have my new motorcycle and I would hate to have to ride it alone." he replied with a chuckle, hoping to hide the nervous feeling he had in his stomach. "She cocked her head at the comment and smirked.*

*"Well we cant have that now can we. Besides, it will be interesting to ride a motorcycle and not be the motorcycle." she commented as Wheeljack walked up beside her and motioned Jack away.*

*"Okay kids, we are ready for the transfer."*

*Jack walked back to the others, while not taking his eyes off the femme, who winked at him.*

*"See you in a minute Jack" she said as Wheeljack then placed her body into stasis, making her optics close and her face go peaceful. The Autobot then walked over to Knockout and patted his shoulder, who then turned and knocked his hand away.*

*"Careful, I just had this polished." the former Con responded, gaining a glare from the Wrecker.*

*"Hey you can preen yourself all you want once you are in your own pretender body, but as of this...."*

*"Enough..." Optimus raised his voice making both transformers turn and look down at the man standing in front of them. Even though he was now only a human in appearance, the Prime still had the presence of the Autobot leader that had towered over them before.*

*"...now start the procedure"*

*Feeling a little embarrassed, both turned back to the controls and activated the machine which started to hum loudly as the cable on Arcee's unconscious body started to come to life. Suddenly her body jolted which made Jack wince a little as a bright white ball of energy appeared in the cable and slowly moved along to the other end which was connected to an adapter that was in place right over the pretender's empty spark*

chamber. After what felt like hours to Jack but really was only a few seconds, the spark of his partner entered the body and almost immediately the body started to change. It's skin went from silver grey to pale pink as it took on a more athletic figure and it shrunk slightly to about five foot in height. The head started to sprout blue hair that also had pink highlights in it. Jack watched in amazement as its' face slowly moulded itself into what he could only describe as a sleeping beauty as it lied there motionless. Once the transfer had finished, The new human looking Arcee opened her eyes and revealed them to be a beautiful electric blue as they looked around the around the room before they stopped at the young man in front of her, holding her hand.

"Hi" she said softly as Jack held her hand, it felt so soft in his own.

"Hi..." he replied smiling.

"...So I guess that ride is still on" he continued as she returned the smile.

A few hours later and both Jack and Arcee were at their favourite spot atop a cliff side overlooking the Nevada landscape as the Sun began its decent below the horizon, the sky now taking on a vanilla like look. They had an incident free ride on his motorcycle moments earlier as both seemed to enjoy the silence between them as the newly human autobot sat behind Jack, resting her chin on his back and tightly holding his waist. Jack had never felt so good as his partner leaned on him.

But as he sat there now on the cliff with her beside him and watched the sunset before them, he found he could not keep his eyes off her. She was the most beautiful looking woman he had ever seen. She was wearing black jeans and a blue tank top that showed off her athletic figure perfectly, her blue hair gently moving in the evening breeze.

While it was true that over the years he had known her, he had come to find her cybertronian body attractive, it had been her personality that had attracted him the most. But he knew any kind of relationship with her would not be possible with things the way they were.

Now though, she was just like him, and he found that he wanted to find out.

"It's beautiful isn't it" she said, breaking the comfortable silence and bringing Jack's attention to her fully.

"Yes it is beautiful" he said looking directly at her. Having noticed this, the femme looked over at him with smirk as her cheeks went slightly red.

"I mean the sunset smooth operator" she replied, her blue eyes looking at him.

At that moment the two of them just looked into each others eyes and Jack without even realising it, had found himself leaning closer to Arcee, their faces almost touching when his lips suddenly pressed against her own. Arcee looked shocked, but that quickly faded as she leaned forward into the kiss. For one long moment, time seemed to stand still between the two of them as they held the kiss. Then suddenly Jack pulled away instinctively as a million thoughts ran through his mind as to why they shouldn't have

*done it. Arcee looked at him confused.*

*"Jack what is it?" she pleaded as he got up and looked down at her like he had just seen a ghost.*

*"Sorry, I shouldn't have done that" he said, his voice breaking as he mounted the motorcycle, but the femme got up and walked up to him looking more confused.*

*"Jack, did I do something wrong?" she quizzed him as he revved the engine, before looking at her one last time.*

*"I'm sorry, I cant..." he trailed off as he rode the bike off into the distance leaving Arcee standing there completely lost.*

*Jack rode for what felt like hours as he replayed the events that had transpired between himself and Arcee in his mind before entering the Silo and parking up. He was physically shaking from what had happened. But he had to speak to Arcee so he walked up to her room. When he got there he saw the door was slightly ajar and looked in to find Arcee sitting against her bed with her knees up to her chest and arms wrapped around them, her face was a mixture of emotions as she looked so lost and hurt. His heart felt like it had stopped at that very moment.*

*'God what have I done'? he thought to himself as guilt and shame took hold of him. He then turned away and walked slowly back to the main control room.*

*He had hurt her, the one thing that he promised himself he would never do to her. She had lost both her partners before Jack had turned up but he was the first partner to actually hurt her. He couldn't be around her anymore, he felt that if he was to see her every day that he would only remind them both of what had happened between them on that cliff before he ran off on his bike, and he could not bare hurting her anymore.*

*He found himself outside Optimus's room. He knocked the door twice.*

*"Come in" came the voice of the Prime. When Jack entered the room he found the Autobot Leader sitting at his now human sized desk, looking at the boy with a questioning look. "Can I help you Jackson?"*

*Jack tried to hide the shame he felt before he spoke, knowing fully well that Optimus would see right through it. He only hoped that the Autobot would not press the issue.*

*"Optimus, I was wondering if your suggestion was still on offer?"*

*As the memory faded, Jack found himself in the dark room with Arcee kneeling in front of him, looking at him intently. He then took a deep breath and looked directly into her eyes.*

*"Arcee, I am sorry for hurting you all those years ago, when I left you on the Cliff-side after kissing you."*

Arcee felt her expression soften.

"Why did you do that Jack, did I do something wrong?"

Jack felt his hands start to shake.

"No Arcee, it was my fault. When I kissed you it felt indescribably perfect. But suddenly I felt guilty?"

"Guilty?" she repeated.

"Yes" he said looking down, not wanting to see her face as he spoke.

"I felt that I was forcing you to choose?"

Arcee kept her eyes on Jack, taking in every word that he said.

"What do you mean, choose?" she asked.

"I know you loved Cliffjumper. Over the years I have noticed the amount of times you visited his grave atop of the silo. And I thought that by kissing you, that you would feel that we were somehow disrespecting his memory and I choked. Almost immediately after I left I felt guilty about leaving you there so I went back only to find you gone."

"Ratchet bridged me back" Arcee answered gently.

"Well I went back to the Silo and came to your room and that's when I saw you, sitting against your bed looking lost. I could see the hurt in your eyes and I decided that I wouldn't hurt you anymore, so that is why I chose to leave. I felt that if I was to stay, it would only bring you more pain and I care about you too much for that to happen. I am so sorry."

When no response came from the femme, Jack looked up to see Arcee looking back at him. Then the most unexpected thing happened. Arcee leaned in closer to Jack, he could feel her sweet breath on his face and she kissed him. It only lasted a moment, but it seemed to calm him down as she slowly broke the kiss and looked at him lovingly.

"Didn't you ever think that maybe I wanted you to kiss me." she replied with a gentle smile. Jack didn't know where to look at this moment but could not take his eyes off the woman in front of him.

"Jack..." her voice going serious.

"...I did love Cliffjumper, but he wasn't my spark mate, neither was Tailgate. But I know that neither of them would have wanted me to spend the rest of my life alone. I want to spend my life with you.....partner..." she answered as a big smile graced her lips.

"...Now how about you kiss me again?" she said as she leaned closer to Jack.

Jack felt a smile appear on his face as he too leaned towards her face till their lips met, sending waves of euphoria over them both. The kiss was amazing, it felt like they were swapping life energy through it as he placed his hand in her hair and she placed her hands round his back and squeezed themselves closer together intensifying the kiss. Time seemed to slow to a standstill again as they embraced each other. Finally parting when their need for oxygen came about. Both panted heavily, as they looked into each others eye lovingly.

"Well I guess this changes things" she commented as Jack smiled at her.

"Yeah, it does."

Arcee cocked her head. "So where do we go from here?" she asked curiously.

"Well I think we should get out of this room first." Jack answered.

"Could be kind of rough." she said playfully. Jack gently stroked her cheek.

"yeah, for them!" he replied as he felt his confidence come back with a vengeance. With the woman he loved at his side, he knew that those who stood in their way would not stand a chance.

And at that moment there were a hell of a lot of those creatures on the other side of the door that was now starting to buckle.

They separated as Arcee equipped her SMG and extended an arm blade on her free arm. She then handed Jack her other SMG.

"It has about the same amount of bullets as this one. Doesn't your armour have another weapon?"

Jack took the SMG. "Thanks, and I am not sure. Let me try something."

Jack then concentrated, his thoughts focusing on another weapon. Then suddenly his holo-tool activated and then changed colour from its usual yellow to white as it reformed into a saber like blade. Arcee looked on in amazement.

"That looks a lot like the star-saber."

Jack looked up from his new weapon to meet Arcee's gaze.

"Well Optimus did say that this armour would have a few surprises."

Arcee smirked at Jack.

"Yeah , I wonder what the rest.." she was about to finish when the doors broke open

to reveal the horde of creatures in the corridor. Jack and Arcee took up defensive stances next to each other. The creatures then lunged at the two who both fired their SMG's into the crowd as the creatures charged at them. Bullets ripping through a number of the monsters before the partners went charging into the horde, blades swinging. Jack swung his blade through one creature, slicing it in half perfectly as Arcee sliced past two others before landing a kick to the face of another. The two managed to fight their way out of the room to find themselves in the corridor. They stood back to back as the horde surrounded them. Jack sliced the head off one then impaled another then hitting one more fully in the face with a reverse roundhouse kick.

"Nice." the femme observed with a smile as she ripped one apart with her arm blades.

"Thanks, anyway I was wondering what you wanted to do for our official first date?" he asked as he sliced at another one. Arcee looked over her shoulder in astonishment at the Prime's question.

"Your asking me this now?" she replied before she grabbed one and threw it into the others.

"Why not, gives us something to look forward to beyond this moment, wouldn't you agree." he said as the creatures regrouped giving the partners some temporary breathing room.

"Well when you put it that way, sure" she replied as Jack noticed some lit flashlights behind the horde approaching them.

"Get down!" came a familiar voice, as Jack grabbed Arcee and pulled her to the ground on top of him. Then weapons fire blitzed the corridor as the creatures were ripped apart by a hailstorm of bullets before falling to ground around the partners who were just lying on the ground staring into each others eyes. Arcee was about kiss Jack again when that familiar voice spoke again.

"Okay you can get up now."

The Commander and his XO stood up to see Wheeljack, Garrus and Tali standing in front of them smiling back.

"Glad to see you are both alright." Garrus said to them.

"Thanks, its good to see you too." Jack replied as Tali handed them both more ammo.

"Well we didn't get here alone" Wheeljack answered as he pointed over to Colonel Kage.

"Colonel, its good to your still alive" Jack said as he walked over to the soldier. As Tali and Garrus whispered something to each other while looking at Arcee who had noticed them and glared back. The Colonel looked at Jack impressed.

"I am happy to see that you managed to save your XO, Commander."

Jack looked at the area around Kage.

"Where's the rest of your team Colonel?"

The older man shook his head.

"I lost two of them during the creatures initial attack, and then the others...." he trailed off as Garrus stood next to the Prime.

"We lost Jenkins and Murdock just before we got to you guys, in the large room behind us. They were suddenly impaled by these spikes that appeared from the ground." Arcee and Jack listened as the Kage continued.

"I saw my men as they lashed about on those spikes, being changed. They were becoming like those creatures. So I put them out of their misery before the change was complete." he said with remorse in his voice. Jack placed a hand on the Colonel's shoulder in support.

"You did the right thing by lessening their suffering." The soldier nodded as Jack turned to the others.

"So anyway, report your status" the Prime said.

"We are were heading towards what is hopefully the Reaper Artifact, and then we came across you and Arcee."

Jack then reloaded his weapon. "Okay then, lets move..."

The group had been walking along the corridor towards what was hopefully the source of the signal. They had not come across any of the creatures for a while now, not that they were complaining about that particular fact. Wheeljack walked alongside Arcee as Jack and Garrus lead the group.

"Arcee" he said as he looked over to her.

"Wheeljack" she answered in a slightly puzzled tone.

"So.....you and Jack." he carried on.

"What about it?" she said acting coy.

"Just.. That its about time." He replied with a smile.

"Thanks" she responded in kind.

Jack then pointed ahead to a ray of light coming out of a doorway ahead.

"I think we found the lab."

## PRIME EFFECT

They entered a large room filled with computer screens as their attention was drawn to a large black object with blue light shining out of the patterns on its surface.

"Well I guess that's the relic then, I'll take some scans" Wheeljack said as he activated his holo-tool. Jack walked over the terminal nearest to the black object and started looking through the research.

"Well the database isn't fragmented here. It seems that the object wasn't the only thing they picked up. They also brought up a number of devices that they called dragons teeth. They had found them on the planet's surface with the remains of beings who had been impaled on them." he read as Arcee and Kage stood beside him.

"We should take this with us, Tali can you download the database off this terminal." Jack asked. The Quarian walked up and used her holo-tool on the terminal.

"Sure thing Jack"

As they waited for the Wrecker and the Quarian to finish up, Jack looked around.

"Where's Garrus?", they all looked around the room, but could not see the Turian anywhere.

"Out here" a voice came from outside the lab. Jack, Arcee and Kage went outside to see Garrus standing next to a door.

"I have found our way out of here." he said as pressed the control panel next to it, opening the doors. "The others looked inside.

"You have found a working elevator?" Jack replied.

"Please don't thank me all at once." the Turian said happily. Arcee and Jack both slapped him on the both shoulders.

"Well done, so we have a way back to the shuttles, without having to face off against anymore of the former crew of this ship. So how do we destroy that object?"

Kage walked forward to Jack and opened up the backpack he was wearing.

"With this, enough explosive to take out a quarter of this ship."

Jack looked down at the bomb and smiled.

"Impressive, so how do we....."



Suddenly a creature jumped on Kage's back and bit straight down hard into his neck, causing blood to spill out.

"KAGE!" Jack shouted as he, Arcee and Garrus stood in shock at Kage who tried to shake off the creature as it clamped down on his neck. Regaining his composure, Jack activated his energy blade and thrust it directly into the monsters' head, causing it scream out loud as it released Kage who fell to the floor with it. Jack finished off the creature as Arcee and Garrus tried to tend to the Colonel's wound which was bleeding out.

"Commander...(cough)..." Kage called to Jack while coughing up blood.

"...You and you team should (cough) get out of here."

Jack knelt down in front of the wounded soldier.

"We are getting you out too, I'm not leaving anyone else behind." he said with a determined look. Kage attempted to smile.

"I don't (cough) think I will be (cough) coming with you. I've been at this (cough) long enough to know that this is it for me."

Jack looked up at Arcee, who shook her head sadly.

"I cant stop the bleeding and the medi-gel isn't helping" she replied. Jack looked back down to Kage who beckoned him closer.

"Commander, I wanted to (cough) apologize for my behavior towards you earlier." he said trying to speak through the pain as the femme held a bandage to his neck, trying to slow the bleeding.

"Don't speak, save your strength." Jack said back to the Colonel.

"No, I was out of line. (cough) I was wrong about you. When I saw you fighting with Arcee back there, I didn't see a boy who was out of his element. I (cough) saw a Prime." he said as he offered Jack his hand.

"It was an honour to serve with you Jackson Prime" he smiled, blood trickling down his chin.

Jack took the man's hand in his own.

"No, the honour is mine Colonel." he replied.

Kage then motioned Garrus and Jack to move him over to the door and lean him up against its frame and hand him his weapon, just as inhuman screams could be heard in the distance. Wheeljack and Tali came out of the lab after finishing their scans and equipped their weapons.

"Throw the explosives package into the lab, I will detonate it while keeping the monsters off you." Kage said as Jack picked up the package and tossed it through the door.

The screams grew louder as the team entered the elevator and looked back to the Colonel sitting against the door. Jack was about to enter when Kage called to him, getting his attention.

"You promise me that you'll will stop Saren." he said while holding the bandage to his gaping wound. Jack looked at him, his face now completely stoic.

"I promise you Colonel." he replied. Kage smiled.

"Then go, get out of here." he answered back as Jack pressed control panel inside the elavator, causing the door to shut as it took them back up. Kage then saw the hordes rushing at him as he used his strength to lift his weapon and fire bursts of bullets at the creatures taking some down while the others kept moving. The colonel then dropped the bandage as the blood started to flow out and picked up the detonator. He held it up in his hand and lifted the lid over the button and prepared to press it as the hordes were almost on top of him.

"Come and get me you \*\*\*\*ers!" he spat as the creatures pounced on him.

The elevator stopped on the hanger bay deck as Jack and his team ran out and sprinted towards shuttle two, which opened it's hatch for them.

"Do you think he.." Garrus asked as suddenly the ship was rocked by a powerful explosion.

"I think that answers your question, now get on board" Jack shouted as they all boarded the shuttle, the hatch closing behind them.

"Get us out of here now and tell shuttle one to do the same." He said to the pilot who nodded and sent the message while piloting them out of the cargo bay and into open space.

As the both shuttles reunited and sped away from the Conestoga, the large star ship was rocked by explosions across its hull until it finally exploded in magnificent fashion. Sending debris in all directions. The shuttles managed to stay ahead of the shockwave and left the asteroid field and back to the waiting Normandy.

"This is the Normandy to shuttles one and two, Commander are you there." Hotrod's voice came over the com link. Jack stood beside the pilot and opened the channel.

"Yeah we are here Hotrod, but we lost Colonel Kage and his team."

"Sorry to hear that, I am opening the shuttle bay doors now." Hotrod replied as Jack went back to his team mates. Arcee put her hand on Jack's shoulder, gaining his

attention.

"He sacrificed himself so that we could get out of there." she said gently. Jack looked at her with a sad smile.

"I know, but we have to make sure his sacrifice was not for nothing. Wheeljack, Tali, I want you two to start going through everything we brought back from the Conestoga. We may have a destination, the planet Virmire but we need to be ready for whatever will be waiting there."

They both nodded as Jack looked out of the window at the planet and wondered how many more would have be sacrificed before this was over, as the shuttles entered the Normandy's open shuttle bay.

## Kapitel 8:

It had been two hours since the Normandy had left for Virmire, leaving the debris of the Conestoga behind them. Things were quiet on board ship as everyone felt the loss of Colonel Kage. He may have been a hard case, but he did have the crew's respect. Jack had spoken to the few marines that were there and they had sworn their loyalty to him and the ship in honour of their fallen leader. Jack walked away from crew quarters and towards the common room. When inside he went straight over to the drink and food dispenser to see what chef had made. As he looked over the meals that was there he could not help but smile.

*'What no organic tofu?'* he thought to himself, then remembering most of the meals he had while living with his mom. Because of her job as a nurse, she wasn't always there to cook him a freshly made meal. But he never resented her for that. Far from it, he loved her. He knew deep down that she would have been there more if she were able but her job was important so that they could keep a roof over their heads. So most nights consisted of either microwave meals or take outs. He shivered when he suddenly remembered the burgers he had to eat at that horrendous dinner. Damn that food as horrible. It tasted like burnt leather, how could anyone want to eat that garbage. But when he joined the Alliance he then realised what great food was, and from that moment he never looked back. Jack almost drifted off with the memories that he had when he noticed Wrex sitting a table alone. So Jack picked up an apple and walked over to him.

"May I join you?" Jack asked as the Krogan looked up at him.

"Jack, sure take a seat. In fact could use the company, I am Sorry about Kage. He seemed like a great soldier".

Jack's face saddened slightly, remembering what happened on the Conestoga.

"Yeah he was." Jack replied as took a bite out of the apple and chewed it slowly, relishing the fresh taste of it before swallowing.

"Well I wish I had been with you, being cooped up on this ship isn't good for a Krogan." Wrex replied dryly before looking around the room.

"You know I have yet to see Garrus in here, he is to busy with his calibrating." he then added as Jack took a bite out of his apple.

"Yeah well recently that would be my fault. I asked Garrus to double check the Normandy's weapons before we reach Virmire. Just to be safe." he said as he then took another bite out of the apple. Wrex nodded while looking a little irritated by the Commander.

"But I'm here, so is there anything you want to talk about?" Jack asked trying to get Wrex's attention away from the comment earlier.

"Well Jack, while you were on the Conestoga, I received a message from Tuchanka, my home world." he said before looking down at the table, sadness on his face.

"What did it say?" Jack asked noticing the change in the Krogan.

"One of my friends there died recently." the Krogan answered.

"I'm sorry." Jack replied, not knowing what else to say. Wrex then looked back at the Commander.

"What do you know of the Genophage?" he said, his voice suddenly sounding slightly angry.

"I know that it is pathogen that has afflicted the Krogan for over a thousand years. That it basically reduces the number of Krogan born so that your population stays low." Jack replied, who when seeing the look of Wrex's eyes suddenly wished he hadn't said anything.

"But did you know that it was designed and released upon us by the Decepticons." Wrex said as he saw the shock in Jack's face at that comment.

"What, how?" was all that Jack could say.

"During the Cybertronian war, both sides were forced to abandon their planet Cybertron and so spread out into the galaxy looking for new sources of energon. Now my planet had a very rich supply, but unfortunately for us the Decepticons found us. Even though we were not as advanced as them, we fought hard to defend our home from those metal aggressors. So hard in fact that the one in command of that particular force. I believe you call him Starscream had his two most skilled scientists create and spread the pathogen across our planet to make us weak and more manageable so that they could use us to mine the energon for them. To do this they used our atmospheric control pillar to spread the Genophage. The pillar was built long ago by an ancient race who were there while our race was very young."

Jack listened to every word the Krogan said, before the last part got to him.

"You mean the Lithone" Jack jumped in. Wrex nodded

"Yes, now don't interrupt..." he barked at the Commander who just looked at him with stoic expression, not giving into the Krogan glaring at him. After Wrex calmed a little he continued.

"...Now my father told me this next part, since he saw it while he was a child. But on that day at the pillar, he saw both of the scientists. One was purple and slightly bulky, with a large gun for an arm and had one red optic, while the other was of a sleek design, dark blue and his face was covered by a visor. Those are the two who started the darkest chapter in my race's history and when I find them, in what ever form they now inhabit. I will make them pay for it in their blood." Wrex finished as he then

noticed Jack looking away for a moment.

Jack knew who both of the scientist Cons were, but he didn't know if Wrex should be made aware of it at this very moment, not with a big mission ahead of them.

"Jack, what is it? The Krogan asked noticing the change in Jack's behaviour.

"Well its just that I know who they are, their names are Shockwave and Soundwave. I have seen them both during the last years of the war on Earth." Jack answered and then waited for the inevitable rage from the Krogan. But it didn't come, instead Wrex smiled at Jack.

"Thanks for telling me Jack, I now have names to follow up on after this mission is over. Don't worry I wont let it interfere with what we have to do."

Jack smiled back at the brute.

"I appreciate that Wrex." gaining a chuckle from the Krogan.

"As I do for you spending the time to listen to me, you're a good friend Jack Darby." he replied before Jack got up and left, saying that he would speak to him more later.

As Jack stood by the elevator waiting for it to open, he looked over to see his old quarters, now resident to his partner and XO. He smiled to himself as decided to go and pay her a visit. He rang the door chime and immediately heard.

"Come in" as the door opened allowing him to enter. He walked in to see that Arcee had decorated the room with numerous belongings of hers and saw the femme sitting on the bed looking out of the window into the hyperspace field that was surrounding the ship as the stars sailed by. She looked over to Jack and the most beautiful smile he had ever seen graced her lips as Jack walked over and sat on the bed next to her.

"Hey, I was just thinking about you partner." she said warmly as Jack looked out of the window.

"Yeah, all good I hope?" he replied just as coy. Her smile widened and her cheeks reddened slightly as Jack turned to face her.

"Of course" she answered as she leaned closer to the Prime, he himself leaning toward her until their lips joined together for one long moment. They then parted, panting slightly. Jack looked into Arcee's eyes lovingly.

"I'll never get tired of that." he said as they embraced each other in a hug.

"Me neither" she replied as they kissed again, this time for longer and more passionately as they laid down on the bed. Both hoped this moment would never end, but then the intercom went off, startling the lovers.

"Jack, you there, its Wheeljack" the wrecker said over the com, earning a sigh from

both of them as Jack lied on top of Arcee.

"Yes Wheeljack, I am here." he replied trying to hide the annoyed feeling he had at that very moment.

"Well, Tali and I have finished our research and would like to brief you on what we have found." WheelJack answered. Then Jack and Arcee heard another voice talking to Wheeljack in the background making him speak again.

"Oh and if Arcee is with you, better bring her along too." he said. The two then frowned when they heard Miko's voice along side the Wreckers.

"Of course she is with him".

Arcee muttered a curse under her breath which Jack could only guess had to do with Miko's impending doom.

"Okay we will be both up in a moment." he said as he then turned off the intercom, cutting out Miko's voice saying

"See I told ya".

Jack looked down at Arcee who's face had gone from annoyed to disappointed as he brushed his hand through her hair..

"Well duty calls..." he said sadly.

"...Rain check?"

Arcee's expression lightened as she smiled up at him.

"Definitely".

They then kissed once more before they both got up off the bed and headed towards the door. Jack offering her his hand and the femme accepting it affectionately, as they left for the science lab.

## PRIME EFFECT

As Jack and Arcee entered the science lab, they found Tali working at a console and Wheeljack standing around a large round table with a set of controls in front of him. Miko was at his side with a huge grin on her face.

"I think that's fifty credits you owe me" she said in a very proud tone as she held her hand out to the wrecker who looked at her bemused.

"Okay that's enough of that." Jack replied in stoic manner as he and his partner

and stood at the other side of the table, holding hands under the table out of view. Arcee gently squeezing his in appreciation.

"So what have you got?" the commander asked looking at both Tali and Wheeljack while ignoring Miko's annoyed look. The Autobot composed himself before beckoning the Quarian to his side and activating the holo-emitter in the center of the table. Suddenly a bright orange and blue display of information, graphs and screens appeared in front of them.

"Well Commander, we have finished our examination of the evidence we collected on Conestoga and analysed it against the data from the Reapers file. It seems that the Reapers use ships like the one we saw at Eden Prime to destroy all organic life every hundred thousand years. Why they do that, no one knows. What else we know is that those same ships emit a field around them which can effect an organics mind and turn them against themselves and others." Wheeljack said as the images in front of them changed.

"You mean indoctrination?" Jack replied as he looked at an old drawing of people worshipping a black ship.

"Exactly, I guess that explains why the crew of the Conestoga suddenly decided that to impale themselves on those spikes." Wheeljack explained as Arcee looked at the image of those spikes.

"What can you tell us about those things." she asked as Tali took control of the holo-emitter and brought up a large scale model of the spikes.

"It seems that these dragon's teeth as they were nick named are used to produce Husks. That is what the scriptures in the file call those creatures we encountered on the Conestoga. The Reapers would plant these spikes on a world and by indoctrinating the population, they would have them turned into those monstrosities. And they do this by releasing nanites into the host that then convert the host's skin, organs, everything into cybernetic material. Therefore turning the host into a synthetic organic drone, ready to do what ever the Reapers want."

Jack looked over to Wheeljack.

"So where does Virmire come into this?"

The Wrecker looked over to Tali and nodded as she activated another hologram, this time of a planet.

"It seems that this planet is off the last set of coordinates we were given by about fifty light years." he replied as he deactivated the holo-emitter.

"So if we hadn't gone to the Conestoga, then originally we would have gone to those coordinates and probably found nothing." Jack replied to which Wheeljack nodded. Jack then activated his com link.



"Hotrod, this Commander Darby, set course for Virmire, but drop us outside its system with the stealth mode online and launch a class five probe so that we can see what is waiting for us." he said as the Autobot and Quarian walked around to him.

"Yes sir, we will be at the Hoc system inside of a few hours." Hot rod answered before the com link deactivated. Jack then turned to the others.

"Well I suggest you all get some rest and prepare for the mission. We will all meet in the briefing room after we receive the telemetry from the probe, dismissed."

As the others left for their quarters, Arcee looked at Jack who looked like he had a number of thoughts going through his mind.

"Are you okay?" she asked tenderly. Jack gave her slight smile.

"Yeah, its just I have a bad feeling about this."

Arcee took his hand into hers.

"If you want I could stay with you until the call comes in."

Jack smile back to her.

"I would like that." he replied gently. They then left the science lab and went to Jack's quarters together.

The Normandy exited hyperspace and its hull shimmered as it activated its stealth mode and slowly made its way to the outer edges of the Hoc system. Once in position it launched the probe which flew into the system towards the green and blue planet of Virmire.

As Jack and Arcee lied on his bed together, Jack was resting his head on his right arm while he held her close with his left. Arcee herself was resting her head on his chest and listening to his heart beat while fiddling with one of the buttons on his uniform. She enjoyed listening to the steady beat of the Prime's heart, as it made her feel peaceful. Neither of them had spoken in the hour or so since they had entered his quarters, words weren't needed at that moment for how they felt for each other. They were just enjoying their company, while waiting for the inevitable call to come in. Then the intercom came to life.

"Commander Darby we are receiving telemetry from the probe."

Jack and Arcee slowly rose from the bed and sighed.

"Thanks Hotrod, Arcee and I will review the findings in the science lab and then could you inform the rest of the team to meet us in the briefing room in an hour." Jack asked as he felt Arcee rest her chin on his shoulder.

"Sure thing Commander. Hotrod out."

The femme then affectionately nudged him.

"Lets go Commander"

Jack turned and smiled at her.

"Okay, lets do this." he replied as the both got up and too the elevator to the third deck.

Garrus was the last to enter the Briefing room and take his place around the long rectangular table alongside Miko, Wheeljack, Kaidan, Wrex, Tali, Arcee and Jack who's face was as stoic as ever.

"I called you all here, because after looking at the data from the probe, it appears that we have found Saren's base. Due to the large facility on the planet's surface and the several Geth Cruisers in orbit around the planet. I am going to need everyone on this mission, which will be to infiltrate the facility, find out what Saren is planning and then destroy the base and take out Saren if he is there. We will be splitting into two teams, Alpha team which will comprise of myself, Garrus and Wrex and Kaidan. Beta team will be Tali, Wheeljack, Miko and Arcee who will be the team leader. We will be taking shuttle one own to the surface after the Normandy drops us off behind Virmire's moon and then engages the Geth ships and draws them away from the planet allowing us to enter without incident. Once there we will land a few clicks west of the target and then split up, entering the facility via multiple areas of access. Now I don't know what we will find down there, but with the number of Geth ships in orbit. Geth centurions are a definite, and possibly Husks since this is the planet where the dragon's teeth was found." he said as he looked at his team.

"Any questions?"

Everyone looked around to each other before looking back at the Prime who smiled.

"Okay, suit up and meet me down in the shuttle bay in twenty minutes, dismissed."

With that everyone left the room as Jack was left with his thoughts.

## PRIME EFFECT

The Normandy had made it to the moon without incident thanks to its stealth mode and released the shuttle which waited as the frigate took up a position next to it.

"This is the Normandy, all systems ready to go." Hotrod said over the com.

"Roger that Normandy, Hotrod give them a good show." Jack replied.

"I'll do my best, Normandy out." Hotrod finished as the Normandy flew out from

behind the moon and moved at top speed towards the Geth fleet. As the frigate entered weapons range, Hotrod deactivated the stealth mode and fired its javelin torpedoes which tore through the first Geth cruiser, causing explosions along its hull as the Normandy flew past and fired at the next ship, gaining the same results. Hotrod then turned the ship toward another cruiser and fired again only for the torpedoes to detonate harmlessly against the cruiser's shields. At this point the rest of the Geth ships had started to turn towards the Normandy and Hotrod pulled the ship into a one hundred and eighty degree turn, then flew back towards the enemy as it evaded the incoming fire. It fired its torpedoes at numerous targets until it flew through the fleet and back into open space, the Geth ships pursuing.

With the Geth cruisers seemingly distracted, the shuttle left the dark side of the moon and flew down to the surface of Virmire. The shuttle landed just outside the perimeter of the base which was based on the coast. Jack and the rest disembarked and immediately split up into the teams and headed off to their target areas. The journey to the facility went without incident, no Geth or Husks were encountered. Looked like the plan had gone off without a hitch, make it look like an Alliance frigate had stumble upon the Geth and make a quick attack before turning tail and running like hell. Saren obviously didn't think that there would be a ground assault to deal with and so had not increased the guard. As they entered the facility's outer area, Jack spotted two Geth centurions and signalled the others too switch to silencer mode on their weapons. He and Garrus then took aim and killed both Geth with shots straight through their heads.

"It's funny how we haven't come up against much opposition yet Jack" Garrus said as Jack took out another Geth before turning back to the Turian.

"It does seem a bit too easy doesn't it." he replied before activating his com link.

"Beta team this is Darby, report status."

Arcee's voice then was heard over the com.

"We have just entered the Facility grounds, have only come up against a few Geth and taken them out without alerting anyone." Jack kept his hand to his com link while Garrus, Wrex and Kaidan kept watch.

"Roger that, Arcee stay safe." Jack replied as Wrex spotted a squad of five Geth walking off to the east of their position carrying something that looked familiar to him.

"You too partner" Arcee finished as Wrex tapped Jack on the shoulder gaining his attention.

"Jack, I think we should go that way, those Geth I just spotted were carrying something interesting." He pointed Jack in the direction the squad headed in.

"Okay, let's see what they are up to." He replied as they moved slowly after the Geth,

Arcee and her team were on the other side of the Facility and had just taken out

another Geth Squad.

"Let me take a look at the Geth leader there." Tali asked Arcee as the others watched the area around them.

"If I can hack into its memory banks, then I can find out what they have been doing here." she finished. Arcee looked down at the Geth before nodding in return, making the Quarian activate her Holo- tool and scan the Geth.

"Anything interesting Tali?" Miko asked.

Tali's eyes went wide and she gasped.

"What, What is it?" Arcee asked noticing the Quarian's expression. She then looked up at the others.

"We need to get Jack out of here now!"

The Geth entered a room inside a large building as Jack and Alpha team shadowed them to the door way, the Commander and the Turian standing at the doorway looking in while Kaidan and Wrex waited beside them.

"What do you see in there?" Wrex asked as Jack and Garrus scanned the room. What they saw was a large room filled with capsules with creatures in them. They then looked at each other surprised after noticing what the creatures are.

"Can't be...there are Krogan in that room." Garrus said, then noticing the glare Jack gave him as a certain Krogan behind them suddenly became enraged.

"They have my people!" he cried out charging into the room leaving the others in his wake, as he fired his shotgun into the backs of the first two Geth. Making them fly forward into the two centurions next to them sending them tumbling. The Geth leader turned round and fired a shot which narrowly missed Wrex as he then shot the Geth in the face. He then walked straight up to the capsules and saw the sleeping Krogan within them, not noticing the two Geth that were knocked to the floor get up and raise their weapons. He heard them and turned around only to witness the Geth fall to the floor dead as Jack, Garrus and Kaidan walked in behind them.

"That was a stupid thing to do Wrex, what if they had set off the alarm." Jack ripped into him, making the Krogan stomp right over up to Jack's face.

"They have my people in there, we have to get them out." he raged as Jack stood his ground.

Kaidan was at the computer console and reading the data it showed.

"Hey guys, look at this."

Jack, Wrex and Garrus walked over and looked at the screen.

"What have you found Kaidan?" Jack asked as Wrex pushed him and Garrus out of the way.

"Well it seems that Saren was experimenting on these Krogan, giving them some sort of formula."

Wrex looked at the screen as he eyes scanned the information before he froze on particular sentence, making his eyes widen.

"Saren has found a cure to the Genophage." he exclaimed. The others looked at him in surprise.

"Why would Saren want to cure the genophage?" Garrus asked as Jack looked to Wrex, only to find him gone. He turned around to see Wrex next to one of the capsules activating its release mechanism.

"Wrex wait!" Jack shouted. But it was too late, the capsule opened releasing the liquid that the Krogan was sleeping in as it dropped to the floor with a thud. Wrex picked the Krogan up and helped it stand.

"Easy brother, I have you." he said gently as the other one opened its eyes and looked at Wrex with a blank expression.

"Brother, what's wrong?" he asked confused by the Krogan's indifference with him. But then the Krogan's eyes narrowed before it let out a mighty roar and grabbed Wrex and pushed him into the wall behind him, stunning the brute. As the Krogan fell to the floor, the other turned to Jack and the others.

"I'm guessing he didn't want to be woken up?" Garrus joked half heartedly, gaining a glare from Kaidan as Jack noticed something about it before raising his weapon at it. It then roared again and charged at them, earning a burst of weapon's fire from the trio, putting it on to the floor. But it didn't die, as it started crawling towards them, a blood trail appearing beneath it as it moved closer to them. Jack sighed as he walked over to it, aimed his weapon at its head as it looked up to him, again with the blank expression. He pulled the trigger and the body then went limp. Jack looked up to see Wrex watching in shock, having only just recovered as he leaned against the wall for support.

"I don't get it, why did it attack." he asked with a sad look on his face. Jack looked at him sympathetically.

"Let's look at the research data and find out."

Kaidan looked over the data with Garrus as Jack and Wrex rejoined them.

"It appears that Saren has had the genophage cure laced with the same nanites that we found in the husks, but these nanites have been altered to only change the Krogan's thought patterns to make them listen to him and him alone." He said as he

worked the console.

"Wait I have found an video file, just enabling." They all looked at the screen as a video of Saren and Sideways appeared with the two of them standing next to one of the capsules.

"So how do the experiments fare Sideways?" the Turian asked as the former con turned to him."

"Well with the information you brought from Sovereign, I have successfully created the Genophage cure and also laced it with the altered Reaper nanites..."

Sideways then motioned Saren to view a video that Jack and the others couldn't see properly.

"...and as you can see the Krogan once given the cure become docile except when being given commands."

A smile appeared on Saren's lips.

"Excellent, when I offer this cure to the Krogan population, they will take it happily and unbeknownst to them, they will willingly become a part of my growing army."

"An ingenious plan. But tell me, has Sovereign approved of it?" the former con asked curiously. Saren looked over to him.

"Sovereign knows my value Sideways, since it knows everything that we do and has yet to stop us. I believe that we have it's consensus to proceed." he replied as the video ended.

"Wait so the Reaper ship isn't Sovereign, does that mean that there is a Reaper on this base?" Garrus asked the others.

"I'm not sure, but the video's date was only a few hours ago which means that they are still here..." Jack replied.

"...but I think it would be best if we destroy this base."

Garrus and Kaidan nodded in agreement.

"Take out the base and we take out Saren, Sideways and this Sovereign. I like it. " Kaidan replied with a grin. Jack felt a hand grip his shoulder and turned to Wrex.

"We have to take the cure with us Jack, my people need it." he said anxiously. Jack looked the Krogan in the eyes. He knew how much Wrex wanted to cure his people but this wasn't the way to do it.

"Wrex, this isn't a real cure..." He was about continue when Wrex grabbed Jack and shoved him into the wall angrily.

"My people need this cure Jack and I will give it to them, and no one will stop me!" he declared, the anger making his eyes narrow at the Commander. Jack had his hand on his pistol, ready to use it on Wrex if necessary but then decided to use diplomacy.

"Wrex..." he said in a calm tone.

"...You said that you didn't want to live under the iron fist of another. But if you use this cure. You will only be swapping one aggressor for another. Is that what you really want?" he finished, looking Wrex right in his eyes.

The Krogan mulled over Jack's words as Garrus and Kaidan trained their weapons on him, but then lowered them when Jack signaled them to.

"I will help you anyway I can to find a cure for your people Wrex, I promise you that. But we cant use this. You have to see that I am right?" Jack pleaded with the Krogan who after a moment or two, loosened his grip and released the Commander.

"Your right Jack, its just that my people have been barely able to live their lives due to the genophage. I guess I just thought that I had found our salvation. Forgive me?" Wrex said looking down at the ground ashamed. Jack picked up the Krogan's shotgun and handed it back to him.

"Come on we have a mission to complete." he said with a smile. Wrex nodded and cocked the shotgun. Suddenly Jack's com link went off.

"Jack..zzzzzz..you..zzzzzz..need..zzzzzz..to...zzzzzz" then the signal cut off.

"Arcee I didn't get that, your signal's breaking up. Repeat your last message." he replied, but the signal was gone.

"Wonder what that was about?" Kaidan asked worryingly. Jack looked at his holo-tool map for Beta team's location.

"They are about several hundred meters north west of us, I think we should meet back up."

The others nodded as they walked back out of the room.

"What about the lab and the infected Krogan?" Garrus asked.

"Well this place must have a reactor. We find it, set it to overload and the place goes up with it." Jack replied while looking over to Wrex who nodded in agreement.

As they neared beta teams last location, having taken out an other few Geth patrols along the way. Jack's holo-tool suddenly beeped, causing jack to look at it's findings.

"What is it Jack?" Kaidan asked. Jack looked over the readings and his eyes widened. "It's detecting another Lithone artifact in a room close by." he answered surprised.

"Well I think this is worth a detour." Garrus said as Jack once again tried to contact Arcee again, only to get static.

"Yeah lets go, my map says that they are heading to us anyway," Jack replied as he went in direction of the Lithone signal.

Arcee and the others ran as fast as they could as they tried to get to the Alpha team, taking out any Geth that appeared in the way. Having just found out that Jack was walking into a trap, all she could think about was making sure her partner, her Jack was safe while she killed yet another Geth that had turned a corner right into their path.

### **PRIME EFFECT**

Jack and the others entered a room that was much larger than the lab they had been in earlier and saw that the Artefact was at the far end. As they walked up to it, Jack could sense it as the others kept their eyes peeled for any surprises. Once he was close to it, Jack placed his hand out in front of the beacon to activate it, but nothing happened. Jack tried again, but nothing.

"It has no power, it is dead." Jack said turning to his team.

"As you will soon be!" a metallic voice boomed, making them look around to where it came from. Jack then looked above the beacon as a large orange hologram of the Reaper ship appeared over them.

"This can't be good" Garrus said as Kaidan stood beside Jack.

"What do you think it is, a VI?"

"Small organic insects, you touched my mind. Yet are incapable of understanding what it is that stands before you."

Garrus shook his head.

"I don't think that is a VI."

Jack took a step forward.

"What are you?" he asked, his face remaining stoic.

"I am beyond your comprehension, I am the apex of evolution and the vanguard of your destruction. I am Sovereign."

Jack then realised the truth.



"Sovereign isn't the name of the Reaper ship or a being occupying it. The ship itself is the Reaper."

"Reaper, a name given to us by the many species that have fallen to our will, as your cycle soon will."

"What do you mean cycle, what is it that you do?" Jack asked.

"For as long as life has gone on, we have been here. We are here at the apex of a cycle to harvest the strongest race that a cycle has to offer, while condemning the rest to oblivion. For that is how we go on as a species while maintaining our original goals."

"What do you mean original goals?" the Commander asked.

"Our goals are too complex for your small, feeble minds to comprehend. Your individuality makes you weak, while each of us is a nation, a collective of all the knowledge of the race that we have harvested."

"So every hundred thousand years you wipe out all advanced life in the galaxy, yet harvest the one race that you deem worthy of becoming one of you." Jack replied, feeling his blood begin to boil.

"Call it what you will, but know this. We have been at this for thousands of cycles and have never been stopped, and that will not change."

"Yes it will. It will because we will stop you." Jack answered back defiantly.

Your words are meaningless. You live because we allow it, and you will die because we demand it. This conversation is over, time for you to expire as all organics do."

With that the hologram disappeared.

"Well I think you just pissed him off Jack." Garrus said when suddenly a familiar scream echoed through the building.

"What is that noise?" Kaidan asked, noticing the look on Jack's and the Turian's face.

"Believe me, you don't want to know." Garrus replied as Husks suddenly rushed through the doorway at the group.

"Go for headshots to take them down." Jack ordered as they fired on the charging horde. Kaidan then looked up to see more Husks climbing down from the upper level around them. The creatures were flowing in from every angle. There was no way to cover all points of the attack.

"We are surrounded." Kaidan shouted back to others over the weapons fire as the husks closed in. Jack powered up his energy blade.

"Prepare for some close encounters people." he said as the husks closed in on the

group."Wrex chuckled at the remark.

"That's how I prefer things" he replied as he fired his shotgun into one in front of him.

"Well I am not really a fan of close quarters, but I'll improvise" Garrus said as he switched from his sniper rifle to avenger rifle.

The husks then pounced at them as Jack prepared to meet it head on only for a gunshot to go right through it, stopping it mid flight. Jack looked up to see Arcee on the upper floor smiling back at him with her SMG's drawn, with the others around her firing down at the husks.

"Thought you could use some backup" she said. Jack nodded back in appreciation before slicing the head off husk who got too close. After they mopped up the last of the Husks, both groups reunited outside the building.

"So once Tali found out that they had set a trap for you, we doubled back to help." Arcee finished explaining to Jack and his team.

"Well I am glad you showed up when you did." Jack replied.

"So you detected the Lithone artifact's power signature, but as soon as you got close to it, it died." Wheeljack said.

"Yeah sounds like a trap to me." Miko jumped in. Arcee then looked at Jack.

"But that black ship is a Reaper?" she asked, the slight worry evident in her voice. Jack nodded back.

"Yes, when it spoke to us, I could feel its animosity. It wanted me, it wanted us all dead and I know that it is capable of it."

Everyone looked at Jack, worry now written on their faces. Then Hotrod's voice could be heard as Jack's com link activated.

"Commander, thought you should know, that Reaper ship has entered the system is heading your way."

"Copy that Joker, tell me. Do you still have the telemetry from the probe?"

The group looked at Jack confused as he spoke to his pilot.

"Yes Prime, why?" Hotrod asked curiously.

"Can you tell us where the facility's reactor is and how far it is from us?" the Commander asked.

"It is pretty close to your position, it is on the west side of the complex, about five minutes if you run Prime." Hotrod answered quickly.

"Thanks, tell the shuttle to come meet us at the rendezvous coordinates in thirty minutes, Darby out." Jack finished before looking at his team.

"Okay, we are going to split up again. Arcee, want you an beta team to go to the reactor and start an overload, and then meet up with us at the rendezvous."

"What are you going to do?" she asked.

"We are going back to the beacon and will remove it's memory core, before joining up with you." he replied.

"Tali you will switch places with Kaidan, since you are good with tech." he said gaining a nod from the Quarian.

"What about me?" Wheeljack said, feeling slightly insulted.

"Wheeljack, I need you to find a way to over load the reactor..." Jack answered back.

"...Time is short, we have a Reaper inbound, so lets get to it." He added as both groups split up again and made their way to their objectives.

Beta team had fought through quite a few Geth on their way to the Facility's reactor. It seemed that the base as now on full alert. Maybe Sovereign warned them, but where is Saren. These thoughts went through Arcee's mind as she and her team fought their way through the Geth and husk forces that were blocking their path.

After slicing down the last husk in front of her with her arm blades, the femme could see the reactor ahead.

"Okay, lets move" she ordered back to the others as they moved into the area, Wheeljack heading straight for the controls.

"How long do you think it will take?" the femme asked as Wheeljack activated the console.

"Give us a few minutes?" he answered back irritably.

"I'm afraid you don't have that kind of time." came a voice from their left. They all looked over to see a Caucasian man wearing purple and gold armour. He was surrounded by husks and Geth.

"Sideways" Arcee called to him angrily, bringing out her SMG and arm blade.

"Arcee right? I would say it is a pleasure, and quite frankly it will be for me." he said before opening fire on the group causing them to take cover.

"Miko, I want you and Kaidan to cover Wheeljack." the femme shouted to them over the gunfire.

"What about you?" the gunnery chief replied.

"I'm taking Sideways." She answered, feeling anger grow inside her spark as she vaulted over her cover and stormed over to the former con's position shooting and slicing past Geth and Husk alike. While Miko and Kaidan gave supporting fire to Wheeljack who was trying to overload the reactor.

Arcee pounced at Sideways who dived under her attack and rolled over in to a kneeling position, his katana at the ready. She then activated her other arm blade and swung both in his direction as he lifted his katana to block her.

"You so much more pretty in person" he quipped at her with sly grin that made her even more angry as she broke the deadlock with him and attacked again. This time he dodged her and kicked her in the back, sending her to the floor. She got on her hands and knees and looked back at him.

"Your not my type..." she spat as she got up and launched into another set of moves as he dodged and blocked all of them.

"...I don't go for traitors and backstabbers."

He just kept that sly smile on his face as he stayed on the defensive.

"But where is the fun in working for one side when you can play both of them and come out on top." he answered as he grabbed her right arm and threw her over his shoulder on to the ground. As she tried to recover he stepped over her and held her down, getting close enough to whisper in her ear. She could feel his breath on her skin and it made her sick.

"Anyway do you really think Saren will let your boyfriend get the information he seeks." he whispered into her ear, making her eyes widen.

*'That wasn't the trap earlier, Saren's setting his trap now.....JACK!' she thought as she let her anger explode as she wrapped her legs around the former Con's body and spun him so that he ended up on the ground and she was now on top. She then hit his face with as much force as she could muster, knocking him out.*

"Thanks for the heads up." she replied as she got up and ran back to the reactor, leaving Sideway's sprawled on the floor unconscious.

Miko and Kaidan were taking out one Geth or Husk after another while Wheeljack was still messing with the reactor, when Arcee vaulted back over the cover and knelt beside them.

Miko saw the fear in the femme's face.

"What's wrong?" she asked while still killing any enemy that came into her sights.

"Saren's real trap for Jack is about to be sprung." she replied.

"You want to go help him don't you?" the woman asked, seeing what Arcee was thinking.

"The mission comes first, I know that but...its Jack." the femme responded, not hiding the emotion in her voice. Miko was about to speak when suddenly the reactor started humming loudly as Wheeljack got up with his guns ready and exclaimed

"We are done here lets go!".

But before her could do anymore, he was hit in the chest by several shots riddling his body and forcing him to the floor.

"WHEELJACK!" Miko screamed as she rushed over to the bot, Arcee too moving to his side.

Kaidan looked back for a moment and cursed under his breath before continuing to fire on the approaching enemy forces.

"I don't think I should have done that." Wheeljack coughed as liquid spilled out of the bullet wounds in his chest. He then looked at Arcee.

"The reactor is going to go off in fifteen minutes, enough time for you to get Jack and get off this rock." he finished.

"You too." Arcee answered, but the bot shook his head. "Need to stay and defend the position. The reactor could easily be turned off." the wrecker said as Arcee was torn between Jack and her friends. Miko then looked at her, her face uncharacteristically stoic.

"Arcee go get Jack, I'm staying to defend this position with Wheeljack."

Arcee didn't know what to say as Kaidan then jumped in.

"I guess I am staying too." making all three look at him.

"Hey, Wheeljack won't last that long and Miko, you won't be able to hold off all those enemies on your own, you need back up."

Miko looked away, she knew he was right, she composed herself and looked back to the young man who was still shooting Geth.

"Okay then." she smiled gaining a smile in return. She then turned back to Arcee.

"You better get moving, we will hold this position and make sure the reactor goes off."

Arcee just nodded, not being able to think of anything to say.

"Oh and tell Jack if he doesn't beat Saren, then I will kick his ass." Miko finished before returning her attention to the enemy. Kaidan then looked at the femme.

"Arcee, you look after Jack now, and tell him I'll be watching over him." he said confidently as he smiled at her.

"I will Kaidan." she replied as she felt a hand tug her own, bringing her attention down to Wheeljack.

"We had a hell of a ride, didn't we Arcee?" he coughed as she held his hand.

"We sure did Wheeljack. Bulkhead would be proud of both of you." she replied with a smile that caught even Miko's attention who nodded in kind before turning back to the fight. Taking one more look at the three of them, Arcee then turned and ran back towards the building where Jack and his team were, leaving beta team and the reactor behind her.

## PRIME EFFECT

Meanwhile Jack, Garrus and Wrex were waiting for Tali to retrieve the beacon's memory core. She was using her holo-tool while cursing under her breath every so often.

"I think I nearly have.... Damn you bosh'tet" she cursed as Garrus started tapping his foot on the ground.

"No pressure Tali." he replied.

The Quarian glared at him, making Jack step in.

"Now that's enough." he shouted as the two went quiet and carried on with what they are doing.

"Why don't you just shoot it?" Wrex questioned, making Tali's eyes roll. But then something caught Jack's attention and he looked over to the main entrance to see a number of Geth enter and another Turian among them.

"Saren!" Jack said as he aimed his pistol at the traitor.

"Commander Jack Darby or is it Jackson Prime, It doesn't matter does it. The last Prime I met was taller anyway..." he retorted earning a growl from Wrex.

"...By the way it's pointless to try to take the core, without power it is useless."

Jack looked at him and smirked. "Then you wont mind us taking it then if it really is that useless?" he replied. Saren walked towards Jack trying to look friendly. "I mean

that I can't let you interfere with our plans."

Jack kept his gun trained on the Turian. "What plans, your helping the Reapers to wipe us all out."

Saren looked back in shock.

"No, after Sovereign showed me it's power I joined it and convinced it of a better way. I am forging an alliance with the Reapers, between organics and synthetics. Working together for a better future, think of the lives it will save." he answered back confidently. Jack couldn't believe what he was hearing.

"Sounds to me like you have gotten too close to them." he replied.

"No, I have studied the effects of indoctrination, and I know of the dangers. But Sovereign will not take control of me, because I am still valuable to it with my mind intact. Now I will ask again, I have no need to kill a Prime, not if you join me?"

Jack looked backing disgust. "I will never join you." he spat back. Saren sighed and looked disappointed.

"Well I did try... destroy them." he shouted as the Geth moved, guns blazing on the four of them.

"Cover Tali" Jack ordered as he charged at Saren, tackling him to the ground and repeatedly punching his face. Garrus and Wrex took up positions next to Tali, who was still not having any luck.

Meanwhile Saren grabbed the Commander by the throat and strangled him before throwing Jack off. He then got up and kicked Jack in the side making him wince in pain.

"I tried to be reasonable, thought that since you were apparently a Prime, that you would be willing to talk." he said as he kicked Jack in the side again, making him roll over on to his back in pain. The Turian was much stronger than Jack and had better fighting skills it would seem. The others were too busy with the Geth to help, so Jack was alone. Saren then picked him up by his throat and held him aloft before punching him a number of times in the stomach, making Jack cough up some blood.

"You humans can't handle much pain can you. I wonder how much it would take to kill you." Saren questioned as he then threw the Prime to the ground, before pulling out his gun and aiming it at Jack's body. He as about to pull the trigger when he suddenly looked away like he had heard something. He then kicked Jack aside and began walking off.

"Your lucky Prime, if we meet again, you will die." He finished as he left the building.

Jack tried to recover when three Geth came out of nowhere and stood over him, weapons trained on his hurt body. The others hadn't noticed with the number of Geth

still attacking them. Jack looked up at the centurions and waited for the trigger to be pulled, when they suddenly dropped dead and familiar blue haired woman bent down at his side.

"Jack, by the Allspark. Are you alright?" she asked in shock as she saw his injuries before helping him up.

"I've been better." he replied. Just then Tali shouted "Eureka" as she pulled out the memory core, and Garrus and Wrex took down the last of the Geth.

"Where's your team Arcee?" Jack asked after seeing her on her own, she looked away in response.

"They are defending the reactor until it blows." she said, her voice sounded uneasy, as Jack looked at her in shock.

"What do you mean?" he asked.

"Wheeljack got the overload to start but not before being shot and so Miko and Kaidan decided to stay and defend the position." she replied.

"We have to go back for them." Jack said angrily, but Arcee held him.

"We don't have time, the shuttle will be here in a moment and the reactor will go off in just a few minutes."

Jack looked around, trying to think of something they could do, but nothing came. He then felt the terrible realization, that they were giving their lives so that he could complete his mission and he had to respect that.

"Okay, lets get back to the shuttle." he said sadly as Arcee and Garrus helped him.

Back at the Reactor, Miko and Kaidan were still keeping the Geth and Husks at bay as she turned to Wheeljack.

"We are really giving them hell aren't we Wheeljack." she said, but when she heard nothing she looked over to see his lifeless body slouched against the wall of the reactor. Miko then looked back at the battle around her and felt her eyes well up. But then a shuttle flew out from the other side of the facility, gaining both her's and Kaidan's attention. They both smiled as they knew their friends would be on board the shuttle and heading to safety.

The reactor behind them was humming so loudly now that they could barely hear themselves.

"It's been an honor Kaidan" she said to him while shooting some more Geth.

"Same here, Miko." he replied as they continued to fight, ignoring the reactor which had started to glow brightly and the humming reached deafening levels.



Meanwhile the shuttle had left the atmosphere just as an nuclear explosion engulfed the facility, as well as the immediate area surrounding it. Jack looked out of the window back to the mushroom cloud that just appeared, he couldn't help but feel defeated. He had been beaten by Saren, and had lost two of his best friends as well as a comrade in arms. He stood there and said a silent pray for his two friends.

*"I am sorry Kadian and Miko!"*

## Kapitel 9:

*[Dieses Kapitel ist nur Volljährigen zugänglich]*

## Kapitel 10:

*[Dieses Kapitel ist nur Volljährigen zugänglich]*